THE RE-SHAPING OF THE FAR EAST

WEALE

THE RE-SHAPING OF THE FAR EAST

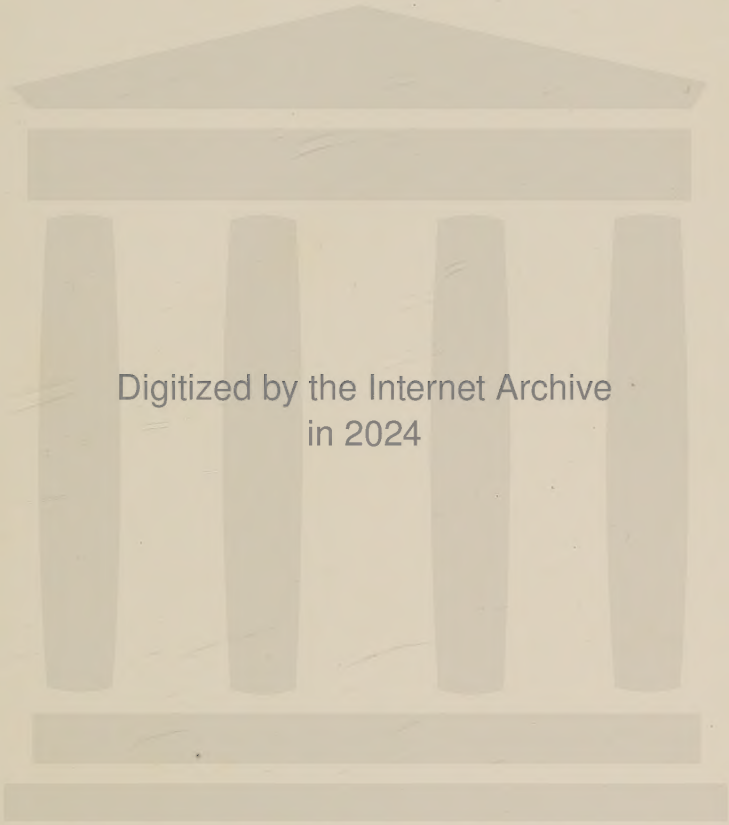
AND the second . . . poured out his vial upon the sea and it became as the blood of a dead man; and every living soul died in the sea.

And the third . . . poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.

And the fourth . . . poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given him to scorch men with fire.

And the sixth . . . poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up that the ways of THE KINGS OF THE EAST might be prepared. . . .

And I saw three unclean spirits . . . for they are the spirits of devils working miracles which go forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather together to the battle of that great day . . . into a place called in the Hebrew tongue ARMAGEDDON. . . .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[*Frontispiece, Vol. I.*

BLOWING UP OF THE EAST KEKWANSHAN FORT AT PORT ARTHUR.

THE RE-SHAPING
OF
THE FAR EAST

BY

B. L. PUTNAM WEALE
AUTHOR OF "MANCHU AND MUSCOVITE"

VOL. I

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS
FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

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Ex Oriente lux

TO ALL ANGLO-SAXONS
THIS MESSAGE FROM THE
UTTERMOST EAST

PREFACE

The kind reception accorded by both the English and American Press and public to a first book dealing exhaustively with the Russians in Manchuria, and exposing the true position of the Northern Colossus in the coveted Chinese provinces, has made me suppose that a second work treating the whole Far East in the same intimate manner may likewise do something towards correcting the many erroneous impressions which are fast growing up as one of the immediate results of the war. This second volume is, therefore, in many respects a sequel to the first, and deals mainly with the Northern Far East — that is, the territories lying north of the Yangtsze.

The whole story of the past decade in China, Manchuria, Korea, and Japan has been a most curious one, and the manner in which all these countries have become entangled with one another and with rival European nations is probably without parallel in the world's history. In the pages which follow everything that needs ample explanation is amply explained; some unimportant travels are

recorded to give the reader the necessary "atmosphere" and to allow something of the actual conditions of the Far East to be understood by all; and finally, the progress of the great war now raging is very fully dealt with in a tentative fashion.

Too many already conclude that if Russia is finally driven across the Amur, or even decides on peace at any price, everything will be quiet in the Far East for decades to come without any other work being necessary than that which may be accomplished by the victorious Japanese armies.

Such is not the case.

Until China has become a powerful country, able to manage her own affairs, intrigues in which all will be concerned will never cease. That Japan can ever control China is a vain dream, for China is too big and has too much latent strength to be handled by any one country successfully. Should public opinion in England succeed in at last awakening the British Government to a sense of its responsibilities in China and to the necessity for instant action, there is no reason why the next thirty or forty years should not be peaceful ones. But if the matters herein touched upon are not properly understood and steps are not taken to deal with every point which needs dealing with, there will be another war in a very few years. This is a point to which great attention should be directed.

In support of all the strong and uncompromising opinions expressed in the pages which follow, I

may, perhaps, state with some pardonable pride that almost every word in "Manchu and Muscovite" has been verified by the march of events in Manchuria, and that in no case have any of my statements, first received a little incredulously in certain quarters, been proved to be anything but the barest facts. A prologue and a very full appendix add the head and tail to the body of the book.

B. L. PUTNAM WEALE.

CHINA, June, 1905.

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THE RE-SHAPING OF THE FAR EAST

RESHAPING OF THE FAR EAST

HISTORICAL PROLOGUE

I. *The Coming of the Chinese*

FAR back, at some period lost in the mists of antiquity, the first bands of Chinese, shouldering their heavy bundles and hurrying on their clumsy carts, pushed from the plains of Western Asia towards the East. From whence these men came, what were the actual causes inducing the first beginnings of a vast migration, what route they followed, are questions no man can answer. It has, however, been reserved for a Frenchman, the distinguished Terrien de Lacouperie, to establish with many incontestable proofs that this migration did take place from some point in Mesopotamia, south of the Caspian Sea. In support of his proposition he has shown that the primitive written character of certain peoples in Mesopotamia bore a marked resemblance to the pictorial writing of the early Chinese; that the worship of Shang-ti and the Six Honoured Ones in China — the Supreme Being and the subordinate gods — is borrowed from

the Susians; and finally that the early Chinese knowledge of astronomy, medicine, canals and artificial waterways is identical with that of Babylonia.

Moving slowly forward, and possibly halting for many years at a time in the oases of Eastern Turkestan, the invaders finally entered the borders of the China of to-day between the 33rd and the 38th parallels, and formed their first settlements in the upper valley of the Yellow River. From the westernmost provinces of Kansu and Shensi they spread their lapping waves of industrious men forward into Shansi and rich Honan; and soon multiplying and increasing, developing themselves by their communistic co-operative system (necessary in the first instance for protection against the savage hordes of aborigines and marauders who must have surrounded them), they at last became a primitive and homogeneous kingdom or dukedom.

What is the approximate date at which these events took place? It is impossible to say. Lacouperie insists that the migration is as recent as the twenty-first century before Christ, or but four thousand years ago. The Chinese aver that their ancient or legendary history began at a date which has been variously calculated at B.C. 2852 to B.C. 3322. Distinguished sinologues dispute acrimoniously with one another over these interesting if obscure points, and it is therefore best to place ourselves outside the arena of doubtful argument and merely record the most probable theories.

The view held by some that the earliest Chinese

records deal with dynasties and annals of the peoples who were indigenous to the soil of China, and not with their own, seems untenable. That kings did rule, that wise laws were made, and that many things of permanent value were accomplished before the advent to power of the Emperor Yao (2085–2004) is quite certain; and therefore it is reasonable to suppose that Chinese records deal with events anterior to the great migration — in other words that Chinese history extends its chronicles over a portion of the Central Asian plateau.

Turning to records of the highest antiquity, we find that Emperor Fu-hsi thirty centuries before Christ (which is about the same time as the commencement of the Assyrian Monarchy) is the first leader mentioned by name. Fu-hsi earned eternal fame by designing the six classes of written characters; by inventing the notation; by establishing the laws of marriage; and by many other manifestations of brain culture dear to the Chinese scholar. Shên-nung, who succeeded him, is credited with having instructed the people in agriculture, established public markets, and discovered the medicinal properties of various herbs. After this ruler came a sovereign no less excellent — indeed the lustre of his ancient reign was so great that it has not yet been dimmed — the great Huang-ti, who may be called the first empire-builder. He began by defeating all rivals to his power, and inaugurated, if he did not actually invent, the decimal system by dividing his territory up with a mathematical accuracy. Ten towns became one

district, ten districts one department, ten departments one province, and finally ten provinces one empire. Weights and measures were also fixed on the same principle; and whilst pre-historic man in Europe and the Americas was rubbing his skin-covered back against trees of primæval forests, the young Chinese was industriously working out his sums to six places of decimals on the abacus. Utensils of wood, pottery, and metal were even then manufactured, and already the Chinese were on the high-road of progress and emerging from flock-tending. During Huang-ti's long reign, which is somewhat naïvely estimated by the old chroniclers as having lasted a full century, the Chinese movement towards settlement, proceeding from the Kansu-Shensi, Shansi-Honan regions adjoining the Yellow River, slowly but surely spread over all the country north of the Yangtsze and south of the Pechili regions, absorbing or destroying the aborigines whose ancient hunting-grounds were to be converted into well-tilled fields. Huang-ti's sons and successors are believed to have carried the standard of Chinese agriculture and industrialism forward, and to have planted Chinese colonies as far south as Tonkin and as far north as Manchuria; but this is still the legendary period, and nothing accurate is really known.

It is not till the advent to power of the Emperor Yao, about twenty centuries before Christ, that the semi-fabulous ends and that the great philosopher and historiographer Confucius deems the history of China and Chinese sovereigns to begin.

The Emperor Yao was intelligent and well-informed and ruled well and wisely, and was followed by the Emperor Shun, a no less accomplished monarch. These names, Yao and Shun, belong to a period obscure to a degree; but it is incontestable that during their reigns the Chinese settlers were drawn more and more closely to one another, and that this welding, in the twentieth century before Christ and on the great plains of the Yellow River, was the beginning of the Chinese Empire.

During Shun's reign the Yellow River burst its banks for the first time and flooded the country far and wide. It is interesting to note that in the twentieth century of our era a European engineer has been called in to express an opinion on the dyking works — works which go back to the time of Shun, and for which their originator, a certain official named Yu, received as a reward the throne of China on the death of the former sovereign.

Yu became first emperor of the Hsia Dynasty, and after him came sixteen sovereigns, whose reigns bring us down to B.C. 1687. The record of this first dynasty is the record of every dynasty in China down to modern times. The founder and his immediate successors developed their territory, behaved wisely to their subjects, and consolidated the growing Chinese. The last occupants of the throne, with nothing to restrain their evil passions, shut themselves up in their palaces, and by indulging in every form of vice, invited the fate which soon overtook them. In 1687 B.C. matters had reached

such a pitch that the Chinese rose *en masse* against the seventeenth sovereign of the Hsia Dynasty, and the leader of this revolutionary movement, a certain T'ang, proclaimed himself Son of Heaven, by the Grace of God and the strength of his own arms.

The Shang Dynasty established by T'ang provided twenty-nine sovereigns, before it was finally brought to an end by extravagance, lust, and cruelty which eclipsed anything heard of before. Inevitable rebellion followed. The successful leader seized the Imperial Sceptre and a third dynasty, that of Chau, was founded. The Chau sovereigns ruled for 873 years, and numbered thirty-five monarchs. Wars and rebellions, the growth and disappearance of numberless feudal States, the undertaking of countless expeditions, — all these things fill the chronicles of these times. The Chinese giant, still a mere boy, was meanwhile growing to his full strength, was stretching his arms and legs out this way and that, always extending farther and farther afield, assimilating aborigines and wandering tribes, asserting himself and overbalancing himself again and again — but always growing. It was during the latter part of the Chau Dynasty that those three most remarkable men, Lao-tzu, Confucius, and Mencius, flourished — each of them born in a petty State or princedom, which had been evolved out of the earlier provinces and military border commands of the Chinese Emperors. Lao-tzu dreams and has wild visions; Confucius

journeys from State to State and occupies himself with ceremonies and moral precepts; Mencius conceives his system. The shadow of the Chinese throne was still as dimly cast over the outlying provinces as that of the German Emperor during the latter half of the Holy Roman Empire. Even Confucius is astounded at the confusion of the times. Journeying from his native State he meets a weeping woman at the roadside. One of the disciples who surrounded him is despatched to inquire the cause of her grief. "You weep," said the messenger in the sonorous language of long ago, "as if you had experienced sorrow upon sorrow." "Alas, I have!" says the woman. "My father was killed here by a tiger — my husband also. And now my only son has experienced the same fate." "Why, then, do you not move from this accursed place?" inquires Confucius, who meanwhile has drawn near. "Master, because here there is no oppressive government," answers the woman. Turning to his disciples Confucius delivers himself of these words: "My children, remember well this thing, — oppressive government is fiercer than any tiger."

Meanwhile ominous signs were not wanting that the Chau Dynasty was to suffer its natural fate. In due course the feudal State of Ch'in subdued the sovereign, overturned the throne, and the son of the conqueror founded the fourth dynasty, that of Ch'in, in B.C. 220. Chi-Huang-ti was a man of consummate skill and ability. It was he who divided the entire Empire up anew into thirty-six provinces;

who ordered the building of the Great Wall of China, and set millions of men to work on it; who cut the grand canals that still intersect China; who built palaces and roads, walled cities and ships, and then, jealous of the fame which the founders of the earlier dynasties had earned in the hearts of his letter-loving population, ordered the famous burning of the books. According to Chi-Huang-ti's insane decree, the entire literature of China, with the exception of certain works on divination and medicine, was to be destroyed. His lieutenants saw that the Imperial command was carried out to the letter; but notwithstanding every effort, secret copies were hidden away, and this, helped by the retentive memories of the *literati*, secured that, as soon as it was safe, the literature of the country could be once more available.

A short decade and a half after the founding of the Ch'in Dynasty, it had ceased to exist; and although the volcanic energy of Chi-Huang-ti had created many public works of inestimable value, he is remembered to-day only for his vandalism.

The modern history of China now begins. In 206 B.C. the Han Dynasty was founded. All Northern China was incorporated within the Empire, and a great revival of learning took place. So lasting is the mark of the Han Dynasty in Northern China, that to this day from the left bank of the Yangtsze to Peking the people call themselves "Han-jen," or "Men of Han." Up to the twenty-fifth year of the Christian era the Hans remained supreme; then the Empire split up into two, forming the Eastern and

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THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA.

Western Han. This lasted until A.D. 220. Meanwhile in Central and Southern China little States which acknowledged themselves feudatories of the Great Emperor waxed and waned. With the end of the Han *régime* a succession of monarchs ascended the throne, with dynasties and dates hopelessly obscure. From A.D. 265 to A.D. 419 the Ch'in and Eastern Ch'in ruled. Then a victorious general proclaimed himself Emperor and founded the throne of northern Sung. After this came, rapidly following each other, dynasties of such obscurity that their very names are disputed, till history brings us down to A.D. 618.

In that year was founded the Tang Dynasty, destined to endure till A.D. 907, and the Imperial power, which at times had been almost non-existent, was greatly increased. Southern China was formally incorporated within the direct jurisdiction of the throne, so that, just as northern Chinese call themselves men of Han, the inhabitants of the south call themselves men of Tang. The twenty-three sovereigns of the line of Tang who sat upon the throne devoted their best efforts towards a consolidation of their power, a revival of learning, and an encouragement of the fine arts. Their generals extended the Empire south and west, and the far-flung Celestial banners floated in Turkestan, in Persia, in Tonkin. Then, as the inevitable falling away occurred in the tenth century, the dynasty could no longer withstand the shocks of hostile forces both from within and without, and in 907

civil war, invasions, and discords caused the last Tang sovereign to succumb.

In 960 another of the great dynasties, the Sung, was founded. The power of the throne was greatly centralised and that of provincial governors curtailed, and then, after many centuries, having allowed the Chinese to develop as a nation in such a wonderful manner, the North appears for the first time on the scenes. It is time to realise how the second great phase in Chinese history — the unending influence of the untamed North — foreseen by the great Emperor Chi-Huang-ti in the year 220 before Christ, when he began the building of the Great Wall of China, became for over a thousand years one of the most important factors in the Far Eastern problem.

2. *The North Asserts Itself*

The rapid review of thirty odd centuries of Chinese history has shown us that the Chinese and English systems of colonisation are not dissimilar.

Beginning at a period at least as remote as the foundation of the Assyrian Monarchy, Chinese settlers with indefatigable industry had overcome every obstacle placed in their path; had pushed their advanced posts forward from their first home in the Yellow River valleys until they had successfully occupied every corner of fertile land in China;

had fought with, and then assimilated, all the aboriginal tribes who refused to vacate the rich plains and retire into mountain fastnesses. As early as forty-five centuries ago marriage was a formal and established custom; various classes of ideographic and pictorial writing had been invented; the decimal system of weights and measures was established; the Yellow River had been dyked; irrigation and canalising were thoroughly understood — a wonderful achievement. At least ten centuries before Christ, the Emperor, who in the first instance must have been strongly similar to the Biblical Shepherd Kings, had so increased his power and position, owing to the growth of wealth and comfort among his people, that an Imperial harem furnished with fair women and sexless eunuchs became a regal necessity. The population was already counted by millions, and the Empire was composed of a number of consolidated provinces with many border commands in the hands of ambitious generals, which sometimes developed into feudal States, only subdued after decades of warfare. Confucius, living six centuries before the birth of Christ, already bewails the good old times of the Emperors Yao and Shun, who had ruled fifteen centuries previous to his days and had established the principle of hereditary dynasties.

By the time of the Han, at least two thousand years ago, a great renaissance in literature and the arts of peace had come and gone; the principle of competitive examinations had been formally acknow-

ledged; commercial relations with the Roman Empire had been entered into, and tribute-bearers traversed the lonely steppe of Central Asia, carrying the humble offerings of rulers, in whose conception of things the Dragon Throne loomed up great and awe-inspiring. During the rule of the Tangs Korea became a possession of China; Persia solicited aid from the Middle Kingdom; Chinese armies pushed into Tonkin and Siam. Cannon throwing twelve-pound stone balls were then in common use. Every art and industry was perfectly understood and by the year A.D. 800 and 900, while Europe was still in its Dark Ages, China had reached its maximum development.

The rich and powerful Empire of China had already attracted the attention of marauding bands from beyond the northern passes as early as the third century before Christ. Chi-Huang-ti, who set whole provinces to work on the construction of the Great Wall, was actuated by no other feelings than those of fear. From the top of the mountain passes which lead from the Manchurian and Mongolian steppes, Tartar bands mounted on hardy ponies had gazed down on the fertile fields and, seized with uncontrollable desire, had wildly careered forward, looting and killing. Chi-Huang-ti had seen and understood what this meant. Unless solid barriers were interposed between the barbarians of the north and the settled Chinese provinces, savage hordes would continue to appear in ever increasing numbers until a point was reached when effective resistance would

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THE MOUNTAINOUS FRONTIERS OF NORTHERN CHINA.

be out of the question. Inspired with these thoughts he commenced the construction of the first Great Wall in the third century before Christ, and the work continued intermittently until A.D. 1547. On this date, during the Ming Dynasty, the last touches were put to the gigantic construction, and a work considerably over three thousand miles in length, and looped and doubled in many places for hundreds of miles, stretched from the sea at Shanhaikwan to the uttermost limits of Chinese cultivation in Kansu.

The work was in vain. At a time so remote that they do not even venture to give the approximate date, the Chinese coined a saying whose meaning is eloquent with a natural-born fear. It is, "Do not fear the cock from the south, but the wolf from the north."

For ten centuries the North sought in vain to burst through the artificial barriers built by the diligent Chinese. Sometimes isolated bands succeeded in evading the vigilance of the sentries, and burst through the northern passes and mighty iron-clamped gates of the Great Wall. Then the gates were closed behind them; signal fires were lighted on every mountain peak; Chinese armies advanced hastily, and a horrible death overtook the daring marauders.

This strange border warfare continued for centuries. The marauding Tartar tribes, flung back from China, sought other outlets. Had China been more vulnerable, it is possible that the greatest

Hunnish invasions of the fifth century would have moved south-east, instead of west into Europe.

It was not until the tenth century that these Tartar Manchurian-Mongolian hordes became strong enough to break through the ancient Chinese defences. In that century the Khetans, a hardy race, after many decades of raids against the Chinese, completely broke down the defences of the Great Wall, poured through the many passes and bastioned gateways, and summarily ejected from Peking the last Chinese dynasty we have noticed — that of the Sung. Under the style of the Liao or Iron Dynasty, the Khętan Tartars firmly established their rule as far south as the Yangtsze, incorporating therefore all the oldest parts of China within their realm. The Sung retired to the Yangtsze and, finding themselves quite unable to cope with the ever advancing tide of Tartarism, invited the co-operation of the Kins, a warlike race of Tunguzian nomads whose habitat was the north-eastern part of Manchuria. The latter, hurling themselves against the rear of the Khetans, succeeded in finally displacing them from Peking, and in due course, putting aside their former protestations of friendship for the Chinese claimants, they were pleased to found the second Tartar Dynasty in Peking, that of the Ch'in, or Golden Dynasty. Of their rule definite records exist for 180 years from A.D. 1115 to 1294.

The lust which these Tartar successes aroused in the breasts of all the marauding tribes of Mongolia soon showed itself. The Mongol tribes dwelling

west of the Hsing-an mountains began a frontier warfare against the Tartar Kins, now firmly established in Northern China. It was, however, not till the Kins had their strength considerably sapped by decades of unaccustomed Chinese luxury that they began to weaken. Then as the Mongols moved south from the deserts with irresistible force under the leadership of Genghiz Khan, the Kins collapsed and fled, and Genghiz, unable to satisfy his earth-hunger in China alone, swept west with his many lieutenants, and carried the Banners of the Golden Horde into Hindustan, Persia, and Russia. It was the reputed grandson of the great Genghiz, Kublai Khan, who founded in 1275 the third Tartar Dynasty, that of the Yuan. The Tartar City was built on to the then existing Peking, with its mighty walls, its fortified palaces and barbaric magnificent distances; and Peking became definitely synonymous with the iron spear-head fitted on to the Chinese staff. The Mongols, although they had driven the last Chinese pretenders to the throne into the sea near Hongkong, endured for less than a century. China and the Chinese were willing to be dominated so long as the literature and learning were left untouched. The Mongols, however, sated with pleasures and made overbearing with conceit, commenced a policy which meant their ruin. Mongols who had no learning or literary distinction whatsoever were put in office everywhere, and a simmering Chinese rebellion began south of the Yangtsze. It was fanned into flames by fresh acts of the highest

indiscretion, and finally when an unfrocked Buddhist priest, who had set himself at the head of the rebels, succeeded in expelling the Mongol soldiery from Nanking, the Tartar hold was temporarily broken. In 1368 the rebel leader Hung-wu proclaimed himself Emperor of the last Chinese dynasty which has reigned in China, and although many years elapsed before the Mongols were driven beyond the Great Wall, the Ming Dynasty succeeded in consolidating its power for a brief space by fostering literature and the fine arts, and by reviving interest in the decaying national life. The first of the Mings gave promise that his house was to be long-lived. In 1399 Hung-wu, the founder, died.

But although the Mings had succeeded in breaking the Mongol hold on China and were devoting themselves assiduously to magnificent literary works destined to make their rule ever famous, the northern terror was always on the northern frontiers. In 1403 Hung-wu's successor ventured to move the capital from Nanking back to Peking. In 1428 a huge horde of Mongol horsemen poured over the frontier. A hundred thousand Chinese soldiers were killed in battle, and the Ming Emperor, Cheng-t'ung, ignominiously captured and carried off. In this fashion for many decades the northern hordes battled, but although they were successful in isolated combats, the great mass of the Chinese nation was now too bulky and too homogeneous to be lightly enslaved.

It was not until another century and a half that an

Mongols and Northern Chinese in Winter Sheepskins.

[*Face page* 16, *Vol. I.*

A Water Gate leading into a City.

event occurred which was destined to demonstrate finally to all that the North was the master of China. In 1559 Nurhachu, the great Manchu leader, was born in a mountain village one hundred miles north-east of Moukden. In 1591, being readily credited with miraculous powers by his Manchu countrymen, he had consolidated a great portion of wild Manchuria under his rule and had begun to war against the Chinese-settled districts of the Liaotung. By 1620, after two decades of desultory warfare, Moukden fell into Nurhachu's hands and shortly afterwards became the first great Manchu capital. Gradually, the rest of Manchuria right up to the Great Wall at Shanhaikwan acknowledged the Manchu sway; but the Chinese realising that once the Tartar hordes had streamed through the fortified gates the fate of China would be sealed, resisted all attempts with the energy of despair. After four years of frantic assaults on the Great Wall and the fortified frontier cities of Pechili, Nurhachu retired unable to accomplish his task. In 1627 he died, and a son of his, Tai-tsung, proclaimed the second Emperor of the Manchu throne at Moukden, took up the work where his father had left it off. The Chinese forces, impregnably intrenched from Shanhaikwan to Ningyuan, shattered every attack and forced Tai-tsung to attempt other means. Allying himself with the descendants of the great Genghiz, the Khorchin Mongols of Eastern Mongolia, he swept west and descended from the wilds into the Chinese provinces through the western passes. In spite of this, and the fact that Peking

was actually reached and besieged by the Manchu and Mongol invaders, these could not maintain themselves at such a great distance from their bases whilst the Chinese armies stood firm on the hilly shores facing the sea at Shanhaikwan. Tai-tsung battered his Banner Corps to pieces against the rock-like Chinese resistance and died broken-hearted. A third Manchu Prince, a boy of five, ascended the Moukden throne, and the Regent, Prince Dorgun, made active preparations to continue a warfare which had now lasted half a century. But events had occurred which rendered further efforts hardly necessary. Rebel bands in China proper had become more and more daring owing to the disorganised state of the country. Amalgamating their forces, they marched from Central China under a single rebel chief to Peking. In due course Peking was captured, the last of the Mings committed suicide, and the Chinese generals in charge of the frontier defences, seeing that it was no longer the Manchus who were their greatest foes, but disorders from within, formed a coalition with the Manchu forces and marched to the relief of Peking. The rebel-dynasty which had been already proclaimed was soon destroyed, order was restored; and at the crucial moment, with tens of thousands of Manchu and Mongol re-inforcements pouring in to his assistance, Prince Dorgun proclaimed his youthful charge, Shun-chih, the first Manchu Emperor of the Dragon Throne under the style of Ta Ch'ing Ch'ao or Great Pure Dynasty. China resisted for many years, but

the Manchus, in firm possession of Peking and the Northern Provinces, were able to pour mobile columns of Tartar cavalry all over China, and within two decades the eighteen provinces were completely subdued. Dating from 1644, or two hundred and sixty years ago, the Manchu Dynasty has been the most successful of the four Tartar dynasties that have sat on the throne of China during the past centuries. The North had at last asserted itself definitely, irresistibly, and irrevocably.

It is time to glance at the third movement, destined to exercise such a vast influence on the other two factors — the supremacy of the Chinese in peaceful pursuits and the ascendancy of the Untamed North in energetic rule. The European, journeying daringly in cockle-shell craft from his far-away home, was already peering more than curiously at the Chinese giant, and his looks immediately filled the Tartar rulers with ill-concealed fear.

3. *The European Appears*

It was during the thirteenth century that the first white man of whom there is definite record reached far-off Cathay. Marco Polo, the daring and brilliant young Venetian, journeying fearlessly towards the Rising Sun, arrived in China whilst the Tartar rule of the Mongol Yuan Dynasty was in all its glory. Kublai Khan, Genghiz Khan's successor, who welded vast China into a Mongol Empire,

was pleased to welcome the Venetian with every courtesy and attention. Marco Polo is astounded at the magnificence and princely splendour of the great Khan's Court; the costly silks, the gold and silver, the brilliant horsemen, the richly coloured tents — for Kublai Khan was still engaged in active warfare with his many enemies, and had not yet forsaken his tents for walled cities, more fatal to the Tartar than a hundred battles. Marco Polo so distinguishes himself that he rises to the proud position of Governor of a Chinese city and its surrounding districts — the governorship of Yangchow. He also journeys everywhere from one end of the Empire to the other until it is evident from his eloquent writings that China in the thirteenth century, even with the heavy hand of the Tartar dynasty pressing down the people, and arresting development, is far ahead of Europe. The noble and magnificent city of Hangchow has no equal in the whole western world. The costly garments of Oriental workmanship are something undreamed of in Europe. Marco Polo, the harbinger of the white invasion, comes, wonders, and admires in the thirteenth century, and after a residence of seventeen years in China takes ship for his westward journey, and passes away in 1292 as the fit escort of a Mongol princess who goes to wed the Khan of Persia. In those early and magnificent days there was no fear of the foreigner.

It was not until one hundred and twenty years had passed and the Chinese dynasty of the Ming occupied the Dragon Throne that the white man

was heard of again. In 1511 the Portuguese, at the height of their reputation as intrepid navigators, under the command of one Raphael Perestralo, cast anchor off the southern coast of China, found out all there was to discover about this far-off land of Cathay, and turned 'bout ship for the Indies.

Six years later Don d'Andrade presented himself at Canton at the head of a respectable Portuguese squadron, landed, was well treated, and proceeded on an unofficial mission to Peking, where he was pleased to reside for some years. The Portuguese on the southern coast, reinforced by other ships, established themselves as traders. Seized by an uncontrollable desire to accumulate a portion of this vast Chinese wealth, the result of thirty centuries of peaceable development, they resorted to nefarious acts which immediately led the Chinese to reprisals. D'Andrade was imprisoned and subsequently beheaded. At Foochow and Ningpo, where the Portuguese traders were already becoming powerful, wholesale massacres were ordered by Chinese officials. Finally, after much filibustering and endless negotiations, the Portuguese were allowed in 1558 to settle at Macao on a peninsular strip of land a few dozen miles from Canton, and thus commercial intercourse with the Chinese was placed on a firm basis as early as three and a half centuries ago.

As time went on the number of new comers increased. Already the missionary Xavier had appeared, and, being refused permission to put his foot on the Chinese mainland, died within sight of

his goal in 1552. In 1582 the great Ricci arrived in Macao and was permitted to proceed to Peking, where he lived until his death in 1610.

Meanwhile the Spaniards had arrived in the Philippines towards the close of the sixteenth century. In 1628 Schall and a band of Jesuit missionaries made their way to Peking and delighted the Ming Emperor Wan-li with their mechanical skill and their wide unprejudiced learning. Schall was made Astronomer Royal and deputed to arrange the Imperial Calendar. His colleagues were appointed to minor offices and overcame all opposition. The Chinese Mings, although the conduct of the Portuguese in Southern China had shown clearly that violence would be at once resorted to unless their demands were complied with, were still moderate and conciliatory in their treatment of the white man. Other influences, however, were already at work. The Spaniards had massacred many thousands of Chinese whom they found inconvenient in the Philippines. European trading ships dominated the southern coast and were disturbing the peace of the territorial officials; the fear of the foreigner, although it had not yet reached the North, was already, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, after a few short decades of desultory intercourse, spreading slowly but surely from the southern coast-line into the heart of the Chinese people.

In 1644 the Manchus had finally succeeded in seating themselves on the Peking throne. For many years there was not much time to pay

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MANCHU LADIES IN THEIR BEST.

attention to the mysterious foreigner; China was torn by rebellions and seething like a cauldron. The Mings, making the most desperate efforts to resist the Manchu advance, encouraged rebellion everywhere, and for at least fifteen years there was the most savage fighting. Hardly had this ceased when events occurred which at once irritated the newly established Manchu rulers. The Jesuits and the Dominicans, now firmly established in Peking, were unable to agree on many points, such as the worship of ancestors and Confucius, and the correct term to use for God. . . . After endless discussions the questions were referred to both the Pope and the Manchu Emperor. Each gave a different verdict. The Jesuits, although anxious to follow the Manchu ruling, could not openly refuse to accept the decisions of the Holy See. They were compelled to obey, and the Manchus, incensed at this setting up of an outside authority when their own was none too strong over the unwieldy eighteen provinces, became at once more hostile. Other dangers were also appearing on the horizon line. Dutch ships were casting anchor in the southern harbours, the Portuguese were becoming more and more enterprising and were openly siding with and arming the rebel fleets against the Manchus; Catholic Fathers were penetrating into the provinces; Cossack marauders were harrying the Amur regions; Mongol tribes who had co-operated in the conquest of China were becoming restive. Thus when, twelve years after Shun Chih had come

to the Peking throne, two European embassies arrived in the northern capital, they were ungraciously received. The first, the Dutch Ambassador, who had come by sea, represented the element which has always been a stumbling-block to all Tartar peoples; since even then the Manchus could not extend their authority on the green waters. The second, the Muscovite Ambassador, conjured up visions of the Cossack marauders floating down the Amur in their flat-bottomed boats and firing on and killing Manchu horsemen sent to collect tribute from savage tribes who as yet owned their allegiance to no one. The Ambassadors were summarily ordered to prostrate themselves on the ground before the august Presence of a Manchu potentate. The Dutchman complied, and as a result was graciously permitted to send ships to China once every eight years under extraordinary restrictions. The Russian, who haughtily refused to do more than bend his knee to any man, was dismissed. Thus ended the first embassies, and in this manner did the Manchu Dynasty attempt to shut themselves and their newly acquired Empire off from the outside world — a policy vain and short-sighted.

The Manchus, with many centuries of history before them, early realised that, unless they exercised something more than a military hold on the country they had successfully captured, they would be unable to maintain themselves beyond the duration of supreme military efficiency. The Chinese

Government system was therefore accepted by them just as it was, and they contented themselves with distributing a number of strong Tartar Generals' commands at strategic and commercially important points over the Empire, and insisting on the adoption of the Manchu queue and dress. Apart from these two things, and the fact that they massed the bulk of the eight great Banner Corps, numbering several hundred thousand men, in Peking and its environs, they did nothing to disturb the general conditions they had found on entering the country. In a few decades, therefore, the Manchu *régime* was accepted by all as inevitable, and the last Tartar conquest soon became a mere memory.

It was whilst things were in this stage that the Russians made that series of efforts along the Amur which culminated in the disastrous Nerchinsk treaty — a treaty that effectively asserted Manchu claims over a vast tract of country which was not historically or geographically a portion of Manchuria. The Manchus when they forced the signature of the Nerchinsk Instrument on the Russian plenipotentiary were at the height of their power. The great emperor K'ang-hsi had succeeded the first Manchu sovereign in 1661. No sooner had he reached manhood than he began to deal energetically with all movements which menaced the peace of his extensive empire. Rebellious Tartar tribes were defeated again and again in the uttermost western confines of Mongolia and forced to tender their submission. Big Manchu armies drove the

Russians from the Amur and burnt their outpost town, Albazin; the growing sailing ship trade in the south was closely overseen; the foreigner was given to understand that he was in the Far East by sufferance alone and that he could not overstep a certain limit. In 1689 the Nerchinsk Treaty was signed and Russia acknowledged herself beaten. The Manchus, convinced that energy and an uncompromising attitude would henceforth solve the now menacing European question, adopted a policy which has been carefully preserved until the present day. But it is time to see how the influences in the south coming by the sea route were steadily and methodically at work.

The Portuguese, who were the pioneers of the southern shipping commerce, were seen to have powerful competitors. As early as the reign of Queen Elizabeth an expedition had sailed from England in a vain attempt to open up trading relations with the Celestial Empire. It was not until 1635 that the first English ships appeared in the Canton River with a charter from Charles I. as their authority. In that year Captain Weddell, in command of a small trading fleet, reached Macao and begged the help of the Portuguese in the matter of opening up relations with the native officials. The Portuguese, alarmed at the appearance of these unwelcome competitors, offered every kind of obstruction, while outwardly maintaining a friendly attitude; the Chinese mandarinate were no less hostile. Good Master Weddell stood it as long

as he could, but at last determined to gain Canton and see what personal influence would do. On his way up the Canton River his boats were fired on by the Bogue forts, a group of mud fortifications commanding the waterway. Without a minute's hesitation he halted his boats, turned his sailing ships into line o' battle, and with a red danger flag apprising all of what was about to happen, opened a heavy fire from the brass ship cannon. The Chinese fire was silenced. Weddell landed a storming party, took possession of the forts, and hoisted the British colours over them. It is on reading of little incidents like these that the predominance of British trade becomes comprehensible. After these acts the right to trade was granted to the English company. For a number of years Canton, Amoy, and Ningpo were visited; but in 1681 it was decided to deal only with Canton, and in that year a large factory was established.

The Canton factory days are full of pleasant fighting. The Chinese territorial influences in the south, which was untouched by the Manchu conquest, looked upon the taxation of the growing foreign shipping trade as one of those delectable things permitted to exist by a kind heaven as a reward for the trials of this life. The trade was therefore squeezed like a lemon full of juice. There is not much of great interest to note as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are struggled through. In 1735, on the Emperor Ch'ien Lung's accession, it was noted that ten foreign trading ships were swinging

in the Canton River — they were never before so numerous. In 1742, His Majesty's ship *Centurion*, commanded by Commodore Anson, made its appearance in the China seas — the first British man-of-war to visit a China port. In 1759, in consequence of fresh English attempts to open up trade with Ningpo, an English merchant was deported by the Chinese officials to Macao and ordered to return home. In 1754 a British gunner who accidentally killed a Chinaman was seized by trickery and summarily strangled. Sharp struggles between the lusty seafaring Englishmen of the eighteenth century and the overbearing minions of the Chinese officialdom fill the chronicles and denote the highly unsatisfactory state of affairs.

At length in 1788, after a lapse of one hundred and fifty-three years of this strangely conducted commerce, the British Government decided on action. A Colonel Cathcart was appointed ambassador, but died before he reached China. Finally, four years later, Lord Macartney left England, with many presents from George the Third to be offered to the aged Ch'ien Lung as tokens of England's esteem. The number and magnificence of these royal offerings may be gauged from the fact that ninety waggons, forty barrows, two hundred horses, and three thousand men were employed to carry them into Peking. After many weeks of negotiations and entertainments, and a number of Imperial Audiences, Lord Macartney was forced to leave the Emperor's Court and Peking without having obtained any

satisfactory commercial privilege, except a direct recognition from the throne of the status of the English traders at Canton.

The great Emperor Ch'ien Lung was then at the zenith of his power. From the northernmost steppes of Mongolia to Cochin China, and from the China seas as far west as Nepaul and Turkestan, Chinese armies, led and officered by Manchus, had fought and conquered. Under such circumstances it required more than a splendidly appointed embassy to convince the Manchu sovereigns that the call at the southern ports was soon to become imperative. In the northern Amur regions the Russians had long ago disappeared. Portuguese and Dutch, Spaniards and French adventurers in the south, were no longer of any consequence; it was England that still pressed forward with greater numbers of ships every year assembling at Canton, and in spite of a severe prohibition attempting to open the closed doors of other Chinese trading centres. Henceforth the story of European expansion in China is merely the story of England.

The eighteenth century passed into the nineteenth, and the disintegrating forces which were only awaiting the removal of Ch'ien Lung's powerful personality soon began to show themselves unmistakably under the weaker rule of his successor. Chia-ch'ing, a son of Ch'ien Lung, came to the throne in 1796 on his father's abdication. In the years immediately succeeding Chia-ch'ing's accession to the throne, the first of the great rebellions which

were to shake the whole of China during the nineteenth century broke out in Honan, Shensi, Kansu, and Szechuen. The struggle lasted many years, for the "White Lily" sect which had been the first to raise the standard of revolt included all the renegades of the northern provinces. Two direct attempts were made to assassinate Chia-ch'ing, and the Formosan pirate pest, which had been allowed to grow unchecked until the Chinese Imperial authorities were unable to cope with it, made it necessary for the East India merchantmen in the southern seas frequently to have recourse to a pitched battle.

Matters had continued in this unsatisfactory state for a number of years when George the Third decided to renew the negotiations which had been so fruitless under Lord Macartney's mission. In 1816, twenty-eight years since Macartney had greeted Ch'ien Lung, Lord Amherst, a diplomatist who had earned a European reputation, started on his memorable voyage. The results were even more disastrous and irritating than anyone would have supposed possible. Lord Amherst was so grossly ill-treated by the Chinese Ministers of State after he had actually reached the precincts of the Imperial Palace that it was impossible for him to accept the insults, and he returned to England without any success whatsoever. In 1820 Chia-ch'ing died and was succeeded by Taokwang, a son of his who had saved his life on the occasion of one of the attempted assassinations. Taokwang

was no less unlucky than his predecessor Chia-ch'ing. The Manchus had indeed, with subtle cunning, endeavoured to secure their power against the accusation, levelled against the other Tartar dynasties, of substituting harsh militarism for the true Chinese system of Government. They had attempted an equipoise by attaching crucial importance to literary distinction in considering men for employment. Yet they had not succeeded in their task. Fresh rebellions broke out in Kashgaria, in Formosa, and in Hainan, which were only subdued by mere *vis inertiæ* in the masses of indifferent soldiery despatched against the rebel leaders. Meanwhile these absorbing cares had caused Canton and the southern trading question with its pushing European peril to be almost forgotten. Notwithstanding all the countless disabilities imposed on the Canton trade, it had continued to grow more and more; numbers of resolute Englishmen came out in the service of the East India Company, and by the 'thirties ladies and children appeared on the scenes in ever increasing numbers. After 200 years of vicissitudes and extraordinary perils, events were in preparation that were to have the most far-reaching consequences. The second period of foreign relations was at hand.

4. *Modern History*

In 1834 the trading charter which had been granted by Charles I. to the East India Company

expired. The importance of the Canton trade, and the number of independent traders who had succeeded in participating in a commerce which was theoretically something in the nature of a monopoly, made it impossible to renew the Company's Charter. Lord Palmerston, with his splendid grasp of foreign affairs, quickly understood that the moment had arrived for a display of energy which might obtain the most important privileges for English merchants. In December of 1833 he caused instructions to be drafted for Lord Napier, the chief of the third mission to China, which were explicit and to the point. Two sentences condensed his views on the subject: "In addition to the duty of protecting and fostering trade at Canton, it will be one of your principal objects to ascertain whether it may not be practicable to extend that trade to other parts of the Chinese dominions. It is obvious that, with a view to the attainment of this object, the establishment of direct communication with the Court of Peking would be most desirable." Thus it was written, and henceforth the guiding principle was to push from the old-world Canton base up to the great North.

Lord Napier's arrival at Canton was the signal for a reception so scandalous on the part of the territorial officials that it is difficult to believe that Lord Palmerston did not at once regard it as a *casus belli*. The Viceroy at Canton peremptorily refused even to receive the British envoy; issued the most insulting proclamations containing a set of

regulations for the management of the "outer barbarians"; and gave it clearly to be understood that the presence of English merchants even in the Canton settlement was only tolerated on sufferance. The opium question, destined to lead to so much trouble, was already causing much anxiety to the Dragon Throne; and these things, coupled with the fact that the import trade had grown to many millions sterling, annually causing an alleged outflow of Chinese silver amounting to an enormous sum, were sufficient partially to explain the Chinese attitude.

Before he had accomplished anything Lord Napier fell sick and died in Macao. The British merchants at Canton, foreseeing that it was imperative for their Government to act energetically if the position was to be saved, boldly sent in a strongly worded petition to Lord Palmerston asking that the Chinese Empire should be thrown open to trade at any cost. In 1836 the British Government appointed Captain Elliot to succeed Lord Napier. Captain Elliot arrived in Canton, only to leave again for Macao with everything at a deadlock. It was beginning to be understood that there could be only one solution. Meanwhile the Peking Government had appointed a High Commissioner for a last attempt to arrange a *modus vivendi*, and his first demand on arriving at Canton was that all the Indian opium stored in the foreign factories should be surrendered to him. After much discussion a thousand chests were handed over. The Commis-

sioner demanded more, and Captain Elliot hurried back to Canton from Macao to see what could be done. So threatening, however, was the Chinese attitude, and so vulnerable to attack were the English traders, that in a moment of weakness Captain Elliot ordered the entire contents of the factories to be handed over. Upwards of 20,000 chests, representing a vast fortune, were delivered into Chinese hands.

The Chinese demand had no sooner been complied with than others more outrageous were made. By 1839, however, even British official patience had reached its limit, and in a sharp engagement at sea, fought on the 3rd November of the same year, a number of war junks were destroyed. In the summer of 1841 Sir Gordon Bremer, in command of a respectable squadron, blockaded Canton and then sailed up the coast attacking and destroying Chinese fortifications. The British fleet at last arrived off Taku Bar and cleared for action. The Peking Court trembled, appointed fresh Commissioners, and succeeded in arranging that negotiations should be transferred once more to Canton. After some additional trouble, and the incidental capture of a few mud forts on the Canton River, it appeared that a settlement would be reached. It was agreed that the island of Hongkong should be ceded to the British Crown, that an indemnity of six million dollars should be paid for the opium destroyed, and that official intercourse should be conducted between English and Chinese officials on terms of equality.

No sooner had these things been agreed on than it became clear the Chinese only wished to gain time. More Englishmen were captured and illegally imprisoned by them, and once more the British fleet moved up the Canton River bombarding and capturing the forts.

Events now succeeded one another with bewildering rapidity. British troops had arrived and prepared to invest Canton. At the last moment the Chinese authorities agreed to everything and succeeded in avoiding the capture of the richest city in China. Meanwhile Sir Henry Pottinger had been appointed British Minister, and Captain Elliot had received his dismissal. Pottinger's instructions were precise. He was ordered at all costs to open direct relations with the Imperial Court and force a permanent settlement on the Chinese Government. Sir Hugh Gough in command of a brigade of British troops was ready to support Admiral Sir William Parker's moves. Pottinger at once placed the conduct of affairs in Admiral Parker's hands. On the 2nd August, 1842, he set sail. Amoy was promptly captured and a British garrison established; Chusan soon met the same fate; Ningpo was reduced and occupied. No sooner had these places fallen than the British fleet entered the Yangtsze River and began to deal in the same fashion with the riverine towns. The Chinese troops were driven from the Woosung forts and Shanghai was occupied. Not content with this, Pottinger ordered the commanders to proceed up the

Yangtsze and capture Nanking — the ancient capital of the empire. As a first step, Chinkiang, seventy miles lower down the river than Nanking, was occupied after a very sharp struggle. The British forces arriving off Nanking found, however, a triumvirate of High Commissioners awaiting them, ready to agree to any terms, and on the 29th August, 1842, a treaty was signed which immediately received the imperial ratification. Under the terms of the Treaty of Nanking, Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai were opened to foreign trade. Hongkong was ceded to the British Crown in perpetuity, and an indemnity of $20,000,000 was to be handed to the victors.

It seemed at first as if the troublous times which had lasted so long were at last over, but the events of the next few years showed that sharp blows could alone solve a question of the most vital importance to Englishmen and other Europeans. So far it had not been decided precisely and definitely who should have jurisdiction over Europeans residing at the treaty ports of China, although the treaty dealt with the matter ambiguously. In other words, the vexed question of extra-territoriality had yet to be settled — and until it was definitely settled there could be no peace.

In 1843 Sir John Davis, a new British plenipotentiary and superintendent of foreign trade, arrived in Canton, and he, under the terms of the Nanking Instrument, became at once the Minister and Chief of the Consular Officers appointed to

reside at each treaty port as the channels of intercourse between Chinese officialdom and British merchantmen. A Chinese subject, accidentally killed by an Englishman, raised the whole question. Sir John Davis very properly declined to deliver up the person of the Englishman to the tender mercies of the mandarins, arguing that it was his duty to deal with the case.

The political atmosphere was still further disturbed by the outbreak of three formidable native rebellions. The Triads in the south started a rising. In Northern China the White Lily sect promptly rose also, and in distant Kashgaria the Mohammedans once more attempted to throw off their allegiance to the Chinese throne. In 1847 the British fleet was once more bombarding the Bogue and Canton River forts, and Davis extorted an agreement under which the whole of Canton city should be thrown open to foreigners without any restraint whatsoever in two years' time limit. The bombardment and the subsequent concession were of no value. Within a few months more Englishmen had been captured and murdered. The situation was becoming more and more impossible.

Meanwhile the Triads and the other kindred societies, under the leadership and inspiration of one Hung Hsin-ts'uan, "The heavenly Prince soon to become the Heavenly King," had duly blossomed forth into the formidable Taiping rebellion, destined still further to complicate an already complicated situation. The Taipings swept north from Kwang-

tung, the province which gave birth to them, like a scourge of locusts, looting and pillaging — carrying fire and sword everywhere in a manner unheard of since the great Tartar invasion. A million discontents from every part of the country eagerly joined the Taiping standard. Beaten off from Hunan, they headed for the middle and lower Yangtsze; Yochow, Hankow, and Kiukiang were taken, and after a desperate struggle Nanking, the old southern capital, fell into the rebels' hands. Hung, the leader, proclaimed himself the Heavenly King and announced himself the first of the Taiping Dynasty. In support of this new dignity he picturesquely made four of his principal supporters kings of the North, East, South, and West.

In 1853 a vast column started northwards from Nanking to the capture of Peking. With their long hair streaming out wildly behind them — as a protest against the Manchu shaven forehead and plaited queue — with their painted faces and huge swords, they might well strike terror into the hearts of all who saw them. Without meeting any serious opposition the Taiping armies swept north. In less than six months they had captured twenty-six important cities along the line of their advance and established themselves within 100 miles of Peking. These rebels hurled themselves against Tientsien into which a strong Imperial force had been thrown, but the stout city walls were too tough a defence for them to break so easily, and the storming parties

suffered such huge losses that it was impossible to continue.

In this plight the Taipings began their retreat south with ever increasing numbers of troops in pursuit. The North had hurled them back and was intent on destroying them, and after a year's absence the ragged remains of the Heavenly King's forces crossed the Yangtsze and put the mighty river between them and the Imperialists.

These startling events had not left the five little English settlements at Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai undisturbed. In 1850 the weak and irresolute Emperor Taokuang had passed away, leaving his distracted country to his fourth son, who adopted the high-sounding epithet of Hsien-feng or "Complete Abundance."

In 1852 attention was still engaged by the unfortunate question of the right of entry for foreigners to the native city of Canton. In spite of the arrangement which we have already noticed, that the open-door policy should be enforced in 1849, the Canton Viceroy, Yeh, obstinately refused to put the agreement into operation. Sir John Bowring, Governor of Hongkong and Superintendent of Trade, fought the question in vain for years, and when the valiant Parkes — afterwards to show himself so splendid — was appointed Consul at Canton in 1856, it became at once apparent that nothing could save the situation.

In the same year the *Arrow*, a lorcha, or semi-native semi-foreign sailing ship, was boarded near

Canton by Chinese officials and the British flag torn down and trampled underfoot. Parkes at once rose to the occasion. He insisted on an absolute apology from the Viceroy and the surrender of the crew, who had been carried off. Viceroy Yeh prevaricated. Finally it came to the usual thing. Sir John Bowring ordered the Admiral to act. The British naval forces in the China seas had become so accustomed to capturing the Canton River forts that they performed the task with the facility characterising a well-practised manœuvre. In October the fleet bombarded Canton itself for the first time and a storming-party penetrated the city. The ships, however, could not land sufficient men to overawe the capital and officials of a vast province; and Lord Clarendon, then Foreign Secretary, consented to despatch an expeditionary force of 5,000 men, urgently called for by Bowring and Parkes.

The Indian Mutiny interrupted the prompt arrival of this force, but Lord Elgin — who had been appointed supreme chief in China — meanwhile arrived, and from Hongkong waged war as effectively as was possible with the small forces at his disposal. Desultory fighting took place all through 1857, and on Christmas Day of that year Elgin presented an ultimatum to the Viceroy, to which not the slightest attention was paid. Canton was stormed, the Viceroy was made prisoner and sent to Calcutta, where he subsequently died, and a provisional commission consisting of Parkes, a

Marine officer and a Naval officer, was appointed, which administered Canton for three years. The Peking Government still refused to deal satisfactorily with the whole question. We next find Lord Elgin off the mouth of the Peiho with his fleet facing the ever famous Taku forts. As even this was not sufficient to convince the Court that the time to act had come, the forts were stormed and a force flung forward into Tientsien. The French, who, since the Crimean War, had been closely allied to the British under the Imperialistic policy of Napoleon the Third, had appointed a Commissioner to accompany the expedition, and finally the Chinese, seeing that further resistance was useless, agreed to the Treaty of Tientsien. This important Treaty, signed in 1858, remained unratified until 1860, and events of some importance must be chronicled before referring to its clauses.

In 1859 Lord Elgin's brother, Mr. Bruce, was appointed to proceed to Peking to exchange the necessary ratifications. No sooner had he arrived off the Taku Bar with Admiral Hope's fleet, than it became clear that instead of an ambassadorial greeting being extended to him, grape-shot and shell would be poured on his vessels if they ventured forward. Undeterred by great booms and other obstructions placed in the river, the sailors attempted to storm the forts in the face of a tremendous fire. Within a short time they were beaten back with a loss of 300 killed and wounded. It was plain that a third war had begun. The British force retired.

Meanwhile in England arrangements were at once made to send a large force which once and for all would end the vexed questions of the North which refused to be subdued. Fourteen thousand British men assembled in Hongkong, and the French, whose fleets were already on the China seas acting in concert with the British, were invited to despatch a force to assist in the necessary chastisement. In the spring of 1860, 13,000 Englishmen and 7,000 Frenchmen arrived off Taku, and after some abortive pourparlers the struggle began. The Allies landed, marched rapidly to the back of the Taku forts, and after fighting, which was very severe at times and ridiculous at others, captured every position of importance from the mouth of the Peiho up to Tientsien, twenty miles inland.

Lord Elgin, who was the chief of this great armed mission, arrived off Tientsien city in a small steamer, and to his surprise was greeted like an old friend by the Viceroy. He refused, however, to listen to the blandishments which were freely lavished on him, and peremptorily demanded that three preliminary conditions should be fulfilled before he stayed the Allies' march on the capital. These were: a full apology for the attack on the Bruce Mission; immediate ratification and execution of the 1858 Treaty of Tientsien; and a payment of an indemnity to the Allies for the naval and military preparations. As the Chinese plenipotentiaries demurred, orders were issued to break camp and continue the march on Peking. Lord Elgin des-

patched those two admirable Consular officers, Wade and Parkes, to meet the Manchu princes who were awaiting the Allies. As a result certain preliminary arrangements were entered into which promised to turn out well. A few days later, however, when Parkes rode forward to Tungchow with an escort and a few companions to make the final arrangements, it became apparent that foul play was intended. Parkes discovered that an ambuscade was being prepared for the Allies. He attempted to warn his commanders, but found escape impossible, and to the sound of an ominous cannonade, he, and such of his companions as had remained with him, were rudely bound hand and foot, flung into carts and hurried to Peking. Arrived in the Manchu capital, even the indomitable Parkes gives a shudder. "This is worse than I ever expected," he tells his companions. "We are in the worst prison in China. We are in the hands of the torturers; this is the Board of Punishments."

These gloomy forebodings were soon realised. Although he was never actually tortured, he was most cruelly handled, and some of his fellow-captives died; for the Chinese leaders, impressed by Parkes' masterful manner and the reputation he had already won in the south of China, believed that a word from him would stay the Allies. Parkes resolutely refused to speak in any way, and after a time, so sharply taunted were his captors, that they ceased pestering him.

Meanwhile the Allies had fought two sternly

contested battles, the first at Changchiawan, the second at Palichiao, and had driven the Chinese soldiery in confusion from the field. Even this was not sufficient, and it was not until the famous looting of the Summer Palace with its priceless gems, its splendid porcelains and silks, its gold and its silver, that the war party wavered. Finally, through the efforts of Prince Kung, Hsienfeng's uncle, Parkes and such of his companions as had not died by torture were liberated. A northern gate of Peking was opened and handed over to the Allied troops, and on the 24th of October Prince Kung met Lord Elgin and Baron Gros, the Allied Plenipotentiaries, and definitely concluded the treaty which has guided the relations between China and the Western nations to the present day.

By the now ratified Treaty of Tientsien, foreigners were extra-territorialised in a manner which was plain to the meanest intellect of Chinese officialdom. Henceforth Consular officers had complete and sole jurisdiction over their own nationals, and under no circumstances could they be arrested or maltreated by native officials without provoking immediate reprisals. Not only was this question solved, but the right of foreign countries to send duly accredited envoys to reside at the Peking Court was admitted. In addition to this, five new ports, Newchwang, Chefoo, Taiwan, Swatow, and Kiungchow, were definitely opened by the Tientsien Instrument, and one, Nanking, by the French Treaty. Additional clauses agreed to the subse-

quent opening of Chinkiang, Kiukiang, and Hankow on the Yangtsze as soon as the rebels should have been subdued. A Customs Tariff was drawn up and agreed on, and in the fifty-six Articles of the Tientsien Treaty and the nine additional ones of the Peking Convention of Peace, every conceivable point was so effectively dealt with that the lustre of Lord Elgin's Mission has never been eclipsed.

4. *From the Post-Treaty Period to the Chino-Japanese War*

The Tientsien Treaty of 1858, ratified after arduous struggles lasting until the autumn of 1860, has well been called the Magna Charta of the foreigner's rights in China. In its ample clauses every point which had caused battles and sudden murders since the memorable December of 1833, when Lord Palmerston indited his famous despatch, was dealt with. . . . The European, daringly appearing in the southern seas in the person of Portuguese navigators during the sixteenth century, had once and for all asserted himself, after a lapse of 300 years, in a manner which even facile Chinese apologists could never explain away. Henceforth the white man was a fact who would always have to be reckoned with. . . . The invincible North from whence the control of the Chinese Empire had always been directed was no longer what it was formerly. The Manchus, esteeming it more easy to govern by

identifying themselves as completely as possible with the Chinese, had, after the death of Ch'ien Lung before the beginning of the nineteenth century, lost their vigorous hold over the eighteen provinces and beyond. It was therefore a task of no great difficulty for the British Government to push steadily up towards the magnetic North. Eight years sufficed (from '35 to '42) to force the signature of the Nanking Treaty and open to the world definitely and permanently five southern ports from Canton to Shanghai. In the 'forties and 'fifties it was the port of Shanghai, after all only a half-way house to the Ultima Thule, Peking, which was spoken of as "the North." Pushing up from Canton with their foreignised "compradores," "boys," "shroffs," and "godown-men," the European merchants established themselves successively in Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai. An English newspaper was founded at Shanghai and became the *North China Herald*. The natives of the Yangtsze basin, uncouth northerners, were trained and handled by the Cantonese, who had followed in their hundreds the wake of the white man, till they were fit for foreign employ.

For twenty-five years this continued with the old Canton hongs waxing fat and rich in their new trading places. Then came the Tientsien Instrument, with the real North flung open right to Manchurian Newchwang, and the Yangtsze, the rich "Great River" of the early treaty makers, accessible up to Hankow as soon as the Taipings should have been destroyed.

Long before the 'sixties the Taiping power was

really spent, but, solidly intrenched along the southern bank of the Yangtsze from Nanking to within a few miles of the sea, it successfully resisted all the efforts of the Imperialists. It was not until the Chinese authorities enlisted the services of two American adventurers, Ward and Burgevine, at the beginning of the 'sixties, that things began to go better. Under Ward's leadership, an "Ever Victorious army," composed of dare-devil Europeans and a picked body of Chinese, appeared on the scenes. In a few months a well-drilled and well-armed force of five thousand men was victorious over the rebels. Ward was unfortunately mortally wounded in an attack on a walled city, and his subordinate Burgevine soon brought matters to a crisis by impounding a big sum of Chinese Government money which he alleged was due to his force.

Major Gordon, afterwards to die at Khartoum, was called upon to succeed Burgevine. Gordon, who had come out with the British Expeditionary Forces to China, promptly reorganised the "Ever Victorious army," succeeded in getting the British Government to lend a number of British officers, and in a couple of years' time Soochow, Quinsan, and Nanking, the last strongholds of the rebels, had been stormed, and the Taiping leaders with all their followers either killed or dispersed. Gordon's force was disbanded. He was loaded with honours, and a rebellion, which had lasted nearly twenty years and cost many millions of lives, finally ended.

Gradually the other European Powers "dis-

covered" China, and arranged treaties on the lines of the Elgin Instrument. In 1858 France had already signed her first treaty; in the same year an American Plenipotentiary who had accompanied the British to Tientsien had affixed his signature to an identical document. The door which England had pushed open invited plenipotentiaries with parchment deeds under their arms to enter, and a whirlwind of treaties soon followed.

Meanwhile the Russians had reappeared on the Amur, had forced the signature of the Aigun Treaty in 1858 from the Manchurian high officials, and had confirmed the cession of the trans-Amur and the Maritime Province by the Ignatieff Treaty of 1860. France seized Saigon and Cochin China at the beginning of the 'sixties, and for a brief spell all seemed quiet. In 1868 so alluring did the prospect seem that a Burlingame Mission of universal peace and goodwill towards all men sailed from Tientsien — a mission to which some reference will later be made. For three and a half decades there is not much of importance to chronicle. In 1876 the British Chefoo Convention opened more treaty ports — Ichang, Wuhu, Wenchow, and Pakhoi — as part compensation for the murder of a British consular officer. By the French treaties and agreements following the Tonking war of 1884, three additional frontier ports, Lungchow, Szemao, and Mengtze, were likewise opened. By the Chungking agreement of 1890 Chungking became the twentieth port opened by British endeavours. In the 'nineties

came the Chino-Japanese war, with Soochow and Hangchow opened. In 1898, the great leasing year, Port Arthur and Dalny became Russian, Tsingtao and the Kiaochow territory German, Weihaiwei British, and subsequently Kwanchouwan, in Southern China, French. Meanwhile successive agreements and treaties had opened, at the invitation of the British authorities, Wuchow and Samshui on the West River, Yatung on the Indian frontier, Tengyueh on the Burmese boundary, and Chinwangtao, Yochow and Santuaow and Shasib.

But more important than the throwing open to trade of so many marts and harbours are the events of the pre-Boxer and post-Boxer years, and it is therefore with the object of seeing something of what these things have produced, and understanding the many issues of the great war now raging,[1] that I will lead my readers by the hand and, craving their kind indulgence, ask them to accompany me in the voyages and political discussions which follow.

[1] It will be understood that this volume was written during the spring and summer of 1905. — PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

CHAPTER I

SIX HUNDRED MILES UP THE YANGTSZE

As soon as you have consulted the sailing-time of your Yangtsze river-boat and grasped what a changeable and wayward thing it can be, you realise that the humble passenger is a somewhat profitless piece of cargo, and that the tides and the question of making the first landing-place, Chinkiang, are matters of transcendent importance. This is because things are still in a transition stage and the passenger has not assumed the importance which will be his in Far Eastern traffic in very few years. For, with a rapidity which is astonishing, the European is pushing into every place in the Far East and sweeping away old traditions.

Your steamer pushes off from Shanghai, the warehouse of Central and Northern China, perhaps between midnight and two of the morning, but never during daylight, and even your captain may not know the exact hour. If you are lucky you leave sharp on time, but until the very last moment coolie-gangs are hurrying bales and packages of many shapes into the holds, with their everlasting choruses

chanted from one group to another; and the last word rests with the all-supreme ship's *compradore*, the supercargo of other days. The derricks and steam windlasses hang gloomily in the night air, for you are in a land where human labour is cheaper than most machinery, and is still fighting sweatily and half successfully even the most approved labour-saving appliances. And since your ship is but a ferryboat, her sides open up and allow the gangs to troop in and out with a freedom which no ocean-steamer would dare to allow; and therefore round the ship's vitals this human tide ebbs and flows.

Until the very last moment, the bales and packages, slung on stout bamboo carrying-poles, troop noisily in. The *shroffs* clicking their tally-sticks murmur to one another the last indecent saying of the singing-girls whose company they have just left; and the stevedore's mates, with pigtails tightly rolled about their heads and the dusty sweat glistening on their shaven foreheads, standing in the dim, kerosene-lighted passages, raucously curse the laggards and hurry them on with shouts. Perhaps it will be half-an-hour, perhaps hours; alone the tally-men, thumping their tally-boxes from side to side and muttering their jokes, know the true tale.

The last moment finally comes and you are surprised that everybody knows it instinctively — in fact, has known it instinctively since the beginning of the long night, after the manner which only comes from well-learned lessons. The captain has taken his place noiselessly on the bridge; the mates

and engineers all appear and disappear; the coolies in their hundreds suddenly cease their chorusing and calling, and melt away in irresolute streams through the battered wharf-gates. Chains exhorted by willing hands begin to rattle; fat hawsers slide slimily overboard, splashing lazily into the water; gang-planks fall away from you with a crash; in five minutes you are in the stream with the engines thudding slowly and pensively, and the shore, with its line upon line of gloomy godowns and its blinking lights, silhouetted against an inky sky-line. Far away until the lights lose themselves in the distance, the emporium spreads mightily up and down the river-bank, until in the black night you realise that you are leaving comparative civilisation, planted resolutely and defiantly on unsympathetic mudbanks, for something less tangible.

You swirl down the chocolate-brown river until the anchorage, with its steamers, its hooting launches, and its countless junks, so eloquently silent along many miles of water-front, is far behind you. In an hour, have you the tide with you, you sweep out of the tributary Huang-pu into the mighty Yangtsze. Here you are in a veritable sea, with great islands lurching drunkenly across your path, which only to your river-pilot are no obstacles. The small hours grow into bigger ones, the hot summer air is cooling, it is time to sleep.

You wake maybe at six in the morning after too short a slumber, hot and unrefreshed. You would sleep again, but the Yangtsze sun pouring down

heavily and crushingly is already high in the heavens, and the heat is beginning to make the air quiver. Your cool bath is out of the question unless you are in an old-fashioned boat of the early days with great brown earthenware *K'angs* cooling the water below in the dark, hidden far from the search of the sun's rays. In the new steamer, with taps and other things, and water stored in overhead tanks, the sun has already boiled your bath for you, and chocolate water straight from the river uncleaned by alum is the next best you can demand.

Out on the deck the cool breeze which blows off the water with sunrise is still faintly stirring the air. You glance at the thermometer; only 90 degrees in the shade — it is the cold season still.

Meanwhile, plodding patiently, the great river-boat of three thousand tons calmly pushes her nose up stream, swimming coolly like a wallowing water-buffalo and searching busily for the deep water. If you are a new-comer surprise will overtake you, for the Yangtsze is so vast in places in these summer flood-times that it is no longer a river but an inland sea — a world of water that, commencing somewhere in the Himalayas perhaps, swings through space until China is reached; then imperatively demands recruits from every stream and rivulet for more thousands of miles, until, reaching Hankow, it becomes uncontrollable when the summer lust is on everything and the sun is shining its hottest; and, riotously overspreading the alluvial plains to which it gave birth ages ago, it becomes a sea, a world of

water restrained only into narrow channels where the cliffs and rocks of the real sea which was formerly here still rear their heads.

Moving always steadily forward, while the sun reaches higher and higher until it strikes straight through the double canvas awning with uncontrollable fury, your good boat pants along. On either side great yellow reeds fledge the river banks. Sometimes, searching for your deep water, you swing in so close on your starboard beam that the swirl of the steamer sends a miniature tidal wave of chocolate water racing along the rich mud bank; and then massive black water-buffaloes who until then have been peering at you indifferently plunge wildly inland to escape the Unknown Thing. At other times the banks fade away farther and farther until they are mere tracings thousands and thousands of yards away. The river-pilot swerves this way and that, sometimes guided by river-marks but most often feeling his way, because the river has become a second nature to him and he understands its many moods and knows how to meet them. Occasionally, but this very rarely, a native quartermaster steps into the canvas grate and heaves the lead. The marks are chanted up to the bridge, sleepily and dully, for he too feels more than he sees. Sometimes his tone suddenly changes to a sharper note — you need not listen to the sounding — the ship has felt too that it is shoaling water, and peering with its nose quietly round is heading away dully in another direction.

Thus you steam up the Yangtsze with its ever

shifting channels and its newly forming islands that sometimes appear only to disappear. You note a delicious piece of green, so cool in the chocolate stream that you would long to explore it. You stretch out to look, but already you have edged far away, for the countless blades of tender grass pushing out of the water are no joy for pilots or steamer companies; they mean dangers which may entirely change the deep-water channel and reshift the ground-plan of the great river.

In the distance, and never too close to the river excepting where a massive mud and reed-bound dyke has been raised to pen in flood-waters, villages dot the fat country. Many miles away from the river you can pick out these rude little towns, for around each heavy clumps of willow and elm stand, rising above the level of the country, trees whose branches serve to shade from the sun in the torrid season, and which in winter are ruthlessly stripped to set the pot a-boiling. And near every village that stands near the river you will find a creek, a narrow, sinuous stream, which crawls far inland to the rice-country, and is crowded with native shipping and junking. On watch at each entrance are the guard-boats of the provincial authorities, with banners floating from the main mast proclaiming their policing and likin-levying duties. On these guard-boats there is but one ancient carronade peering over the bows, a hopelessly out-of-date weapon which serves its purpose, however, well enough. Lolling under the blue and white

awning are the crew, a lazy crowd who find life not a little dreary. Only on official feast-days and holidays when the little carronade crashes forth flames and smoke, and strings of crackers, festooned down in red chains from the rigging, are loosed off with a roar of musketry, do the crew wake up and don their soldiers' clothes. On week-days, what boots it to make more of the parade than mere mud-banks demand? Therefore the crew sleeps peacefully.

At regular intervals, the big and little villages with their clumps of trees and their guard-boats and junks punctuate time and distance along reed and grass-grown banks. Beyond these villages for countless miles inland stretches the rice-country, those fat fields of Anhui and Kiangsu, which to this day forward their tribute in kind to the Manchus in Peking. There is nothing else to watch until suddenly your steamer hoots mightily, and the engines, that have been beating out their ten or eleven knots, halt a bit and go forward more solemnly and slowly at half-speed. As you come abreast of a village four or five hundred yards off, a heavy native ferry-boat pushes out of the hidden creek with some native passengers and their pigskin trunks. Rowing rapidly, the squat-shaped craft swings into the stream, and as she comes towards you looses off a string of discordant crackers — a necessary greeting to your ship, which is on a maiden voyage. For in this way are the river-gods propitiated and their possible anger placated. A line is thrown, the native pas-

sengers jump and scramble in through your open sides — their belongings are banged lustily aboard after them; other men clamber off, bound for their ancestral homes; there is more shouting, and almost before you have time to realise it the telegraph has rung full speed again and the ferry-boat has sunk away behind you, tugged back by the violent current. It is only one of the call-stations, where in the prosaic words of the treaties "steamers shall be allowed to touch for the purpose of shipping passengers or goods, but in all instances by means of native boats only, and subject to the regulations in force affecting native trade."

Thus onward, only occasionally half-halting grudgingly at such rare call-stations. The sun reaches the meridian and slowly sinks down across the horizon, with heavy, uncouth water-buffaloes blinking knee-deep in the water along the banks, and the country, as flat as your hand but rich beyond belief in rice-production, heaving away in limitless stretches north, south, east, and west. Sometimes a river-steamer of the old Mississippi days passing down stream with its double row of decks, crowded black with native passengers, toots a merry greeting to you, the new and modern arrival, as she hurries away. And towards nightfall, 160 miles from Shanghai, the first treaty port, Chinkiang, with a pagoda planted half out in the river, and with hills and rocky islands scattered around, looms up in front of you.

Chinkiang, which according to the wiseacres of

the 'sixties would rival and outstrip Shanghai, is a little place which has not fulfilled expectations. A line of hulks, one for each steamer company, is slung along the river-front a hundred yards or so from the shore, each held in position in the swiftly flowing waters by countless chains — moored head and stern. From the hulks to the river bunding, wooden bridges, very narrow and very flush with the water, carry you ashore. The hulks are vessels of the old days, which having served their full time on active service when old China was being opened to the world, are allowed an honourable retirement in their hooded pensioners' dress. Figure-heads lean on their curved bows, and strange names, such as the "Wandering Jew," call your attention to the fact that they are of the Early Victorian period. But even these will soon disappear in the change that is coming over the East, and in their places will come brand-new steel pontoons from the Shanghai docks, hideous but more useful in the money-making age.

But hardly have you bumped alongside the hulk than the holds 'tween decks far below from where you stand are flung wide open, and the cargo in heedless confusion is once again trooping in and out. Even before you came alongside, hundreds of coolies clinging to the massive wooden fenders of the hulk in the most perilous fashion, began jumping on board with a six-foot gap of swirling water below them, out of which no man could come alive were he to fall. It is the Chinese indifference to any-

thing, no matter how dangerous, which stands between them and immediate cash-earning. A few minutes sooner or later may mean a few cash more or less, and what man can say the price at which his life is valued!

On shore the Settlement which has not fulfilled expectations spreads itself. There is the little China bund with the weeping willows hanging listlessly in the heat; a few dozen big verandahed houses; some lolling native policemen; whilst, behind, a blurr of Chinese city-walls and buildings show the limits of the Europeans' boundaries. Chinkiang, in the opinion of the early treaty makers when the great river had only just been prised open to foreign trade, was to be the great anchorage of ocean-going craft which had steamed all the way from the Far West to the Far East. Here the ocean craft would await up-river cargoes, or, surrendering their papers, would steam themselves under special passes to the head of the middle Yangtsze — Hankow. Instead of this, Shanghai has become the great warehouse, and Chinkiang is nothing but a very ordinary and common-place little port, sweltering in the sun. In the East, never prophesy!

Below the little European Settlement is a junk- and raft-crowded stream, which you may take for the inevitable creek. It is no creek, however, this; it is the opening into the Grand Canal. The Grand Canal! All you who have travelled through the Suez cuttings and seen the work of a de Lesseps, think of

a canal system not a few dozen miles long, but hundreds and thousands of miles in length, with thousands of miles of subsidiary canals all connecting and feeding one another; a Grand Canal stretching from Hangchow in latitude 30 and the very centre of China, to Tientsien and Peking in latitude 40, where is the great North; a canal a thousand miles long passing through four of the greatest provinces and providing the cheapest carriage in the world; a canal which, one day, connected with Canton! But, alas, much of all this is to-day merely theory, since for many scores of years the sloth of China's rulers and the ever increasing silt and mud have rendered these magnificent waterways, built when Europe was in the Dark Ages, impracticable in many parts. From Chinkiang, however, back to Hangchow and Soochow and dozens of other rich cities in the interior, many thousands of native craft still sail along, picturesquely carrying produce and passengers; and were China to be but reformed by energetic men, in a single decade this water-borne commerce would bring about a gigantic development in trade. All along the great Yangtsze, which is still in theory the British sphere, there are immense possibilities of this nature. Everywhere there is water with millions and tens of millions of industrious people; and it would require but few changes and a sound policy to convert these regions into the richest and fattest in the world.

You must not wander too far, however, in search

of facts, for presently your steamer will shriek its steam-warning, and soon will be panting off in the night to reach Nanking, fifty miles higher up, by grey dawn.

In due course on the morning of the second day you are tied up, with Nanking, the former capital of the Empire, in front of you. The neatness of Chinkiang has disappeared, and before you is merely a confused and dirty-looking landing-place, with no European Settlement, and apparently no Chinese city excepting a hovel-like collection of houses and a handful of rough godowns.

Nanking as a port of foreign trade is an example of one of those things which only happen in China. Opened to the Western world by the French Treaty of 1858, it was not until the end of the 'nineties that treaty-rights were accorded to the place, and those outward and visible things, Consuls, Commissioners of Customs, and merchants, appeared. Why it was opened so casually after being forgotten for forty years no one exactly knows, excepting that after the famous "leasing" years of 1898 with bits of China being chipped off by all the Christian Powers, someone who had still some regard for Celestial impotence concluded it would be a good thing to throw open the city to general trade, and thus remove a possible source of temptation to the annexing Powers. And in this wise was Nanking opened.

Far behind the sullen landing-place, sullen because the great river is viciously eating away great pieces of brown-black foreshore, is an enchanted

city, delightful if dirty, because if you know your history you may find all manner of things hidden away in certain corners. Forward, therefore, from the riverine landing-place to where the long line of lofty crenelated grey brick walls heaves up in the distance.

Once through a filthy native quarter you come on a broad and respectable *ma-lu* or horse road. At the head of the road stand a grim group of ramshackle carriages, to which are attached ponies of strange build and colouring — mostly whitish ponies with the curious yellow-green coats of extreme old age and dirt peculiar to China. The history of these strange conveyances is curious. After they have served and been condemned in up-to-date places, such as Shanghai, and have been laughed at by even native fares elsewhere, it is decided that the time has come for shipping them to Nanking, there to drive on this solitary five-mile road which leads to a decaying capital in a manner which causes you long afterwards to wake in the night and groan in the silent agony of bitter recollection. Who could describe the Nanking hack-carriages? Each yard you progress forward is punctuated and scrupulously recorded on your spinal column; each crack of broken whip on your wooden steed only jerks you forward until the next blow; each curse only ends for a fresh one to ooze up — it is a dry agony, only interrupted in order that repairs to a crumbling harness may be effected by means of a string.

In this fashion you finally clatter up to Nanking's grey walls, and your bare-footed and bare-faced Jehu gives you the final grin and prepares his adjectives for the scene which must follow according to etiquette. It is a dull enough business, for your defeat is certain in the end — since who can fight the Chinaman on the monetary question?

The crenelated walls, with their reed-grown gaps, enclose no living city at first sight, but one which still lies half-dead, paralysed by the misdeeds and the misfortunes of the Taiping rebels. Within the walls, twenty-two miles in circumference, are howling wildernesses, miles and miles in extent, covered with rank-growing vegetation and strewn with piles of broken bricks, which raise a lasting protest against all cruel rebellions. Sometimes the energy of the peasant Chinaman has asserted itself in little patches, and then within the city walls you have such strange anomalies as fields of wheat and barley and endless kitchen-gardens. But the dominant feature of China's some-time capital of the South is ruin — the absolute, crushing ruin which can only come after a decade of Napoleonic warfare. The world-famous Porcelain Tower, once the most beautiful Pagoda in China, and the Taj Mahal of the yellow man, vanished fifty years ago during the Taiping struggles, and only broken and scattered bricks remain of the structure which was the glory of Nanking. Scattered far and wide are the remains of palaces, the abodes of the Taiping leaders who called themselves the Heavenly Kings. Beyond the Eastern walls

are the Ming Tombs, with avenues of stone animals and curious monuments, where lie the remains of the earlier Ming sovereigns. To see these tombs is interesting, for although everything else has been desecrated, to touch the graves of ancestors was too great a crime even for rebels. In many corners you may find relics of the past, which explain things in China's history which seemed inexplicable.

But Nanking, although so prostrate from blows dealt half a century ago, is recovering after a fashion, and when it is connected by railway with other centres will regain something of its former importance. It is the seat of the Viceroy of the lower Yangtsze provinces, which are the fattest in the whole Empire. Nanking, therefore, is the richest plum in the basket of Chinese officialdom, the dreamed-of post of all Viceroys; for although the city is a tumble-down affair, the Viceroy takes toll from many tens of thousands of miles of fat land and hundreds of wealthy cities, and can rapidly become rich beyond the dreams of avarice. But the old Southern capital is a difficult post, and since the time of the Taipings it has become the rule that only men from the Hunan province are eligible. And the reason is on account of one of those mixed-up things which also only occur in China. Tseng Kuo-Fan, father of the Marquis Tseng, so well known twenty years ago in England, on the approach of the Taipings from Southern China, threw himself into Changsha, the provincial capital of Hunan, and aided by tens of thousands of his own provincials, beat the Taipings off. It

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was this same Tseng who later, as generalissimo of the Imperial forces, and with Li Hung Chang and Gordon as two of his lieutenants, finally destroyed the Taiping power and garrisoned the newly captured Nanking capital with Hunanese troops, reputed then to be the bravest and fiercest in the whole Empire. The Hunanese troops, possibly because they have such a big reputation, are also great secret society men, and have made Nanking the headquarters of the dreaded *Kolao-hui*, the most formidable secret organisation in the whole of China. Established in the 'forties of the seventeenth century, whilst the Mings were still wrestling with the Manchus for the overlordship of China, although the whole of the northern half of the country was already under the Tartar yoke, the Kolao-hui continued to fight; and though in the end it was nominally crushed and reduced to submission, it has always remained a species of clandestine Tammany Hall of the Yangtsze, with all manner of means of opposing and obstructing the Government, and even of raising the standard of rebellion if its wishes are not paid strict attention to. These things, and the fact that the Hunanese garrison of fifteen thousand men is still maintained at Nanking with other garrisons of fellow-provincials scattered up and down the river, force the Government to appoint Viceroys of the same province, — thus not upsetting the curious ruling by equipoise, which is the *leit motif* of the Chinese system. It is strange that the Chinese Government plays off the men of one province

against the men of another in much the same way as the Indian Government does with the races of India.

The Nanking Viceroy is therefore a man of all men among Chinese high officials, and he is the more important of the two Yangtsze Viceroys who entered into the so-called Yangtsze compact in 1900 — a compact which Downing Street to this day fondly believes to have been made owing to the energy of British officialdom during the Boxer year, whereas it was a self-preserving agreement spontaneously entered into by two men who knew the northern movement would miss fire. In this way is history written and delusions spread abroad which in the end lead to great mistakes.

Once more back to the steamer, and once more plodding up the river. Soon it is no longer Kiangsu province but Anhui territory which lines the river and shuts it in. Rising ground is more frequent and the rice-fields are pushing closer and closer to the river. Sometimes now the river shuts in quite narrowly and suddenly, and heights rising high above the rolling plains provide admirable positions for forts and heavy guns which in resolute hands would make the passage of this great waterway impossible. Once already, at the Kiang-Ying forts on the lower reaches of the river, a taste has been given of what the Chinese could accomplish were they so minded and did they but go to work with Japanese carefulness and precision. As you steam higher and higher and see these heights

rising again and again dozens of times, an ominous impression forms in your mind. . . . If this Chinese question is further mishandled, as it has been during the past decade so consistently and foolishly, the position on the Yangtsze may one day become impossible. Artillery and men are all that are needed to make lines of iron gates between Hankow and the sea, and once these gates were there the Chinaman in mid-China could assert himself in a way which would astonish the entire world. No one, however, will take such a point of view seriously as yet, for until now, although there have been riots and risings on the Yangtsze since the beginning of Treaty intercourse, there has been no well-organised movement. Mobs have risen again and again and killed foreigners and burnt European settlements; but after British gunboats have steamed in and cleared for action, things have always simmered down with the heavy haze of the Chinese atmosphere obscuring too clear a view of it all. But this was whilst China was learning. After the giant lesson of the great Far Eastern war, all lessons will have been done with and something else will be seen. And soon the British and other European gunboats on the river will be merely toy-ships, unequal to the part they have played in the past.

Thus in time the third river-port, Wuhu, two and a half days from Shanghai, is reached. Curiously enough, the direct reason why steamers can stop at this place and European merchants build their houses and godowns and buy and sell, is because

an Englishman, Margary, was brutally murdered in the early 'seventies on the Burmese frontier. The Chefoo Convention, opening four ports and six call-stations to foreign trade, was the vengeance demanded for the assassination of Margary, a British Consular official — a vengeance which was the kindest to take on a people who have been too rapidly dragged from the slumber of ages. Wuhu was the principal one of the four ports.

In Wuhu the river frontage is packed with thick layers of native shipping, lined with timber and bamboo rafts, and stacked high with great cargoes of rice; whilst a noisome native city runs down to the very water's edge, and countless half-naked coolies sluice water from the stream into their buckets and pant up long lines of stone steps to sell their burdens. Except for the shipping offices, a Custom House and some Consular Officials, there is no evidence of the white man to be seen. The steamers have bitten into the life of the port because they are strong and cheap; but the European is swamped by the dense masses of humanity which surround him, and is too weak as yet to compete. Around you there is nothing of interest to be seen and the sun beats down with the heat of a fury. More native boats sidle continually to the anchorage laden with silk and rice which they have borne here from the interior on canals running into the back-country; there is nothing but a mass of sweltering humanity and greater masses of boats and junks always moving.

NATIVE SHIPPING SNUG IN A CREEK.

[*Face page* 68, *Vol. I*

ON THE YANGTSZE.

The back of Wuhu is the China sportsman's paradise, with deer, wild pig, pheasant, partridges, and woodcock to be shot by the boat-load; and here, in the old days before the foreigners' demands sent native huntsmen out in big droves slaughtering callously in season and out of season, you could get a variety of game unknown elsewhere.

Wuhu slips away in the distance, and you thud ever onwards, conscious now that you are on the biggest river in the world, if not the longest. Around you are no longer the rolling plains composed of the silt borne down ages ago, but an older land of an earlier geological formation. The river, which was a mere river of mud in the beginning, now bores its way round great rock-like islands which split up the stream into many channels. The buffaloes and the nest-like villages crouching by the side of the creek-heads have faded far away in the distance. Below Kiukiang the river is the true Chinese picture which you can see gaudily embroidered on silks and satins. There are rocky islands heaving high up, sometimes crowned with quaint pagodas and small temples; clumps of sage-green trees which make brilliant patches of colour on the dark background; great arms of limitless water opening up to the right and left, proving that during the summer flood-time the Yangtsze may be dozens of miles broad. The red-painted beacon-boats with their lonely native lightkeepers — forming part of Sir Robert Hart's great system — become

more and more frequent; the Yangtsze encountering obstacles it does not love, against which its flood-waters battle in vain, is here in a querulous mood. It ranges round rocky islands with a swift-flowing current, and far and near are patches of miniature maelstroms, prosaically called *chow-chow water* by the matter-of-fact Chinaman, who knows that such whirling places are made to engulf him.

Thus on the third day with the ever shifting panorama you approach Kiukiang, another little port separated from the outer world and sunk in the middle of vast inland China.

A few miles below the town the river opens out on the right bank into the vast and shallow Poyang Lake, which native steam-launches and miniature steamers are beginning to furrow, displacing the junk of yore. A red bluff of land pushes up to you, you round a bend of the river, and Kiukiang, one of the earliest ports settled by the white man after the Taipings had been crushed, is before you. There is the same little foreign Settlement, pressed in between the water and the Chinese city walls; the same line of hulks, the same little bund; and withal a heat more crushing than any you have as yet experienced along the river. Kiukiang has the questionable reputation of possessing the hottest summer in the whole of China.

In full view of everything and occupying the best site, a Roman Catholic church, massive and calculated to impress the Chinese mind, rears itself high above everything else. All along the river

you notice these Roman Catholic churches, either crowning the crests of hills or pushing into the front rank at the water's edge, every site carefully chosen by the master-priests of the mother Church, so that the power and dignity of the See of Rome shall be properly impressed on Chinese minds. And whilst at Kiukiang the summer heat beats down on everything and crushes the life out of everyone, Catholic priests still hold their services with a determination which is praiseworthy. Always patient, always painstaking, Catholicism still dreams of converting all China.

Once this little Settlement was closely connected with British markets, for before the Ceylon and Assam gardens killed China teas it was from here that immense quantities of the fragrant tea-leaf were packed and shipped to London. Then tea-tasters, a now fast-vanishing race, came in their dozens and stood all day long in cool rooms tasting and retasting, until their palates would serve them no more, hundreds and hundreds of cups of cold tea, the samples of countless square-chested boxes awaiting shipment to the London markets. These were the days when fortunes were easily made in China. The port was a bustle, steamers came and went, and out on the plains beyond the city a race-course was laid out by prosperous tea-men. That was in the 'sixties and 'seventies. Then Ceylon and Assam began their competition, and soon Kiukiang was killed dead, unable to produce such strong-tasting crops as its

Indian rivals. On the plains you can still see a few rotting timbers rounded after the manner of race-course rails; it is all that remains of the old days.

In the native city there is but one thing to be seen — the once far-famed porcelain of the Kin-te-chen factories, where the priceless pieces of Imperial china used to be manufactured. But even this industry has fallen into decay, and now coarse modern ware of but little value takes the place of the former exquisite productions. Sometimes, after a long talk, a shopkeeper will produce a piece that has been secreted away since long ago and is an example of the old style. But even such are hard to find now, for modern commercialism has caused everything of value to be bought up by native speculators who understand what prices such things now command. Sweltering in the heat, full of noisome smells, oppressed by its fallen fortunes, Kiukiang is the damned of all places in summer. Not a leaf stirs, not a breath can be drawn without gasping, and in the mid-day sun even the coolies stagger and swear it is too hot for work. Here the mercury can steal up far above 100° Fahrenheit and remain there night and day for weeks and weeks.

As you wait for a few tea-chests that dribble aboard to the tune of an exhausted *yaho-ing*, the climate-handicap which has kept the East back for so many years is impressed on you. How can men work when for many weeks of the year the mercury wanders up and down between 95° and 105° in the shade night and day? The white man's soul is

eaten out of him; even the yellow man cannot support it; and it is this which, having gone on for ages, has given the inhabitants of such climes the characteristics which they now possess. The winter, a short winter with raw winds, only brings fever and chills, because your pores have been opened so long in the six months' summer that they are fit for nothing; spring may come, or it may not, for once the cold season is ended and the northerly winds have ceased blowing, the sun shines crushingly and raises the temperature of the still air higher and higher with the rapidity which only belongs to elementary things. Thus it can be a white man's country only for one generation; after that the breed sinks to the Eastern level as it has done in old Portuguese Macao.

Not a minute too soon Kiukiang melts away in the hazy atmosphere, and, 445 miles from Shanghai, you pound onwards, welcoming a faint movement which stirs the air. The next morning it is another province, Hupeh, the fourth since your travels began.

The river has now freed itself from the mountains, and limitless plains once more stretch away — fat plains full of everlasting food. Enormous wooden rafts become more and more frequent, rafts that float down river stolidly and take very often half-a-year from their point of departure to their destination. On such queer craft are whole families of people in straw and bamboo huts, with poultry, dogs, and pigs wandering about as unconcernedly as if they were

on *terra firma*. Smoke, too, rises from the chimneys of this floating village, and as your proud steamer passes, women come out of doors, gaze for a moment, and then climb down wooden steps to the water's edge to bale rice-water into their pots and pans. The rafts which anchor at night call a curious artifice to their aid when they are navigated down-stream by day on the flowing tide. Sampans leave, weighted down with huge sea-anchors, and making for the middle of the river cast these into the deep. The sea-anchor, a great structure of matting and timber held into position by big stones, sinks just low enough to grip the water, and then the raftsmen, a thousand yards off on their floating village, start heaving in on an enormous bamboo-built drum, fifty men hauling together to a vast shouting with a headman beating time and leading off the choruses. It is a primitive but wonderfully effective method, and by such means the rafts, so heavily freighted with their own wood that they draw fifteen or twenty feet of water, keep the deep-water channels and avoid the treacherous shallows from which they could never be dragged without unbuilding.

The population, too, along the banks has changed, for those who have eyes to see and ears that understand. Already at Chinkiang the first port, the soft speech and lisping sibilants of the cotton and silk Yangtsze delta, and the gentle people who fell such an easy prey to the Taipings, have disappeared, and the half-North, which is Southern Mandarin, is

breaking through. At Nanking the difference has been even more marked; at Wuhu and Kiukiang the gutturals are decided, the people sturdier and rougher; and in Hupeh and in Hunan provinces the last traces of the river-mouth have disappeared.

On the fourth day clay-red Hupeh province with sage-green grasses and vegetation becomes more and more apparent, and the river winds its way entrancingly over plains which grow greater and greater in expanse. You feel you are far from the sea and deep in the interior. Light-hued junks of golden bean-oil colour fling up their canvases in an azure sky; the air is clearer and drier, the buffaloes are of smaller but more graceful build. At last away on in the distance on the north bank of the river there is a long brick line; a high hill in the middle; steamers are puffing this way and that; there are railway bridges curving away inland. It is Hankow, mile 644 up river, a middle point of the Middle Kingdom and destined to become one of the great centres of the world. The raw Yangtsze has been left behind.

CHAPTER II

HANKOW AND THE BEYOND

As you slip through the water and the haze of buildings becomes clearer, you realise that the old-time little river-ports have been left far behind and that you are approaching a second Shanghai — a Shanghai over six hundred miles from its prototype, a city placed in the heart of China at the junction of great and small waterways, with rich and almost virgin provinces full of hardy people massed about it on every point of the compass. And if you know your Manchuria, you will also say that Hankow is destined to be the Harbin of four great Chinese provinces — that it will soon have mills and factories in quantities; railways linking it with Peking in the North and Canton in the South; steamers and tow-boats in ever increasing numbers throbbing up the six hundred miles of water to its wharves which are the termini of the main river; smaller shallow-draft craft going in far greater numbers than at present four hundred miles higher up to Ichang, which is the highest navigable point for steam on the Yangtsze; yet smaller boats driving 350 miles in

another direction up the Hsiang River to Changsha, capital of anti-foreign Hunan — in a word, everything conspiring to make the middle point of the Middle Kingdom, with its water and rail communication in every possible direction, and one hundred millions of people within easy touch of it, a place which will become one of the chief centres of the East.

The left bank pulls nearer, and there are steel railway-bridges crossing the inevitable creeks, and heaving away to the North, where they melt in the distance to faint spikes of steel. Presently a train rattles away, keeping within eye-sight of the river until it feels safe, and then plunging due north on the Peking road. Four miles down river from the old steamer wharves are new, non-British steamers discharging steel carriage-wheels in thousands and other great masses of bridge-parts, cranes, rails, bolts and bars — all the scores of things necessary to complete more than a thousand kilometres of railway. The river-banks, until now happy to remain mere Yangtsze mud, are being already bunded here with masonry and cement, and in two years' time the Hankow bund will sweep majestically along five miles of river-front from the old English Settlement to the end of the new Belgian railway concession.

New Hankow is now close before one with the foreign Settlements succeeding one another every half a mile. Handsome red-brick buildings are springing up everywhere along this fine water-front, and from the tops of Consulates the flags of half the nations of Europe hang listlessly in the hot air.

Rickshaws, which were unknown ten years ago outside of Shanghai, hurry along in their hundreds; coolies, with their heads protected from the sun by the big Hupeh hats of flapping straw, hurry bricks and building materials along. New Hankow is rapidly rising, and all are in a hurry to get rich.

At the British Settlement your steamer grunts contentedly and heaves alongside the wharf. Its up-river journey is now finished, and in a few hours it will be scudding rapidly down-stream pushed along by the mighty current with the quickness of a cruiser. Here are many steamers flying the red ensign; the Englishman is still safe on water, but everywhere else there are signs that a bitter fight will soon come even here.

The gang-planks are hardly down before you are wrestling 'tween decks to force your way through the native hotel-runners, who tear the sleeping mats and bundles from the hands of fellow provincials returning from down-river and by much frantic yelling seek to secure custom. Before you have moved ten paces the unloading has already commenced, and Kiukiang tea and bales of merchandise are trooping out violently past your legs to a din that hangs irritatingly in the hot air. On the great river you are conscious, as nowhere else, of the raw state the trade of China is still in. It is brute humanity wrestling noisily for its few wants and tearing exchange products from its plains.

A rickshaw deposits you at a hotel which would have been an impossibility a few years ago. There

are great darkened verandahs and swinging punkahs, iced beer pouring from the cask to your throat with a rapidity which enchants you, and a list of visitors which makes you wonder whether Hankow has become a Cairo. The hotel-manager, who is of course a German, energetically handling things and making money with the thermometer over the hundred mark, is smiling, and on his face you read the happiness which comes from dollars. A year ago the hotel, a structure of brick like the whole string of hostelries from Suez to Singapore, was in the hands of an Englishman. The hotel lost money in a more and more disastrous fashion, and the British shareholders ground their teeth. Then the useful, careful German came along — an ordinary enough man, but with the capacity for taking infinite pains. He was nobody, but had saved a little money. Soon he had talked to other Germans, and together they leased the hotel for ten years. Losses were soon turned into profits, and one day, it being the end of the month, when dollars made him wax familiar, the manager laid a heavy hand on my shoulder, and offering me the freedom of his bar — I state this deliberately as a warning to all other Germans — confided to me over iced beer that he had made three hundred pounds in thirty days. A few weeks before, the Kaiser's third son, who is serving in the German Asiatic squadron, had presided over a dinner at which were present all good Germans on the middle Yangtsze. One hundred and fifty-six men had sat down, and from inland

places came many telegrams of regret that no appearance could be put in. In three or four years there would be five hundred and fifty-six, mine host confidently stated, and Germany, in the heart of the British sphere, would be cutting the ground away from under the Englishman's very feet.

And it is not only the Germans who are making such efforts here in this important place, for there are many others, as will be shortly shown. All these people are ardently supported by their Governments, who push their various schemes with energy, resolution, and purpose; and although England in the British Settlement and on the river is, for the time being, holding her own, there is danger that unless the British Government tries to understand better the nature of Continental scheming, this will not remain long so. For the time being there are five hundred British subjects on the Hankow Consular registers; British shipping occupies, too, the premier place; the British Settlement is the centre of all activity. But the Germans have an increasing interest both on water and on land; the Japanese are cutting in carefully and cautiously; French and Belgian firms are splitting up into many parts and then taking away the growing business of the place, which was formerly conducted by a few great houses. Each nationality, having realised the immense possibilities of the future here, is active and busy; alone the British and the Russians keep to the old traditions. They are the two most careless and casual peoples in the world.

It is a curious thing that the Russians, who everywhere else have been our rivals, should here be our allies. But it is a fact. Since the old days they have been established on the middle Yangtsze as great traders in China teas, and although England has forsaken this part of the world for India and Ceylon, the Russians still remain true to their first love. Their sweet-smelling godowns — how sweet tea smells when it is stacked mountain high in countless chests, no man can write — still lie in the old British Settlement; their tea factories, where the fragrant leaf is compressed into bricks which can travel on camel over the caravan-routes, and their tea buying, are still conducted by English experts. Some of the tea travels straight from here to Odessa in vessels of the Volunteer Fleet, or did before the war; part goes to North China, and is then conveyed slowly and painfully over a thousand miles of desert until it reaches Siberia and holy Russia itself. But no matter by what road, the cargoes are always moving.

In the old days the brick-tea factories were true manufactories — that is, places where the labour and crushing was all done by hand on wooden machinery. In those days the dark godowns, filled with hundreds of brawny natives stripped stark naked and straining themselves in the great summer heat until the sweat poured off their bodies in streams, were sights to be seen and remembered. With choruses and cries the coolies would fling themselves by dozens on the wooden lever-beams,

a picked headman of brawny muscle leading each gang, and cr-r-r-ush, so that you could understand the whole process with your ears, the dampened tea-leaves would fall into the solid little caravan blocks. Now that has passed away, and modern machinery does the work. But from the factories come the same strong whiff of the East, the same pungent smells, which make you know that you are in a land where steel and iron are still only experiments.

The great war, however, is at last making itself felt here. The former Russian friendship with Englishmen is fast vanishing, for the fact that we are allies with the Japanese is more than any friendship can endure. For weeks the news of the bitter defeats has been laughed at on the Yangtsze, and all have said — "Wait until Russia's real strength is felt." But now the weeks have grown into months, and Kuropatkin cannot move; and in every heart a foreboding of what is to come is felt for the first time.

Thus, whilst the war rolls on, a dozen problems are being worked out or are awaiting solution in far-off Hankow. Before the events of 1895 and 1898 no one else had Concessions or Settlements in this all-important place but England. Then, because it was plainly seen that England would not move a finger to arrest the break-up of China, every nationality pressed forward, and five new Settlement-Concessions had to be granted by China — to Germany, to Russia, to France, to Japan, and even to insignificant Belgium. And not only this, but

through our negligence we allowed the granting of the grand trunk railway from Peking to Hankow, which will have a total length of 1,200 kilometres, to be given to the Belgians; and since 1900 things have altered materially in a way which does not promise well for our future. Already the railway is working along many of its sections and bringing down great quantities of produce which all Continentals take good care is not handled by Englishmen. Already the French — people who do not well understand how to trade, however talented they may be in other things — have so actively coalesced with the Belgians that the Belgo-French party is to all intents one, solid and indivisible. Already the Germans, who until after Kiaochow were content to make much money by slipping through the door which England had held open for them, are talking about their treaty-rights on the Yangtsze and their equal rights with England since the Anglo-German agreement of 1900 made by Lord Salisbury. And the Belgo-French party, antagonistic to Germany in Europe, coquets with the Germans in Hankow, because all the Continent is against England and Japan in China, and is determined to make an end of such an unholy alliance, no matter at what cost. They are pushing in everywhere and attempting to cut the ground from under our feet.

Alone the Russians of Hankow, even with the war raging, are too proud to enter into a compact with the others, and are now merely holding aloof. They have been here in Hankow for thirty years,

and have too many traditions to forget the past lightly; and all these new-comers from the Continent are of a rough race unknown in China ten years ago, with whom other men do not easily consort.

If you cross to the other side of the river and enter the great Chinese city of Wuchang, there is equal cause for dissatisfaction. Viceroy Chang Chih-tung, foolishly extolled only a few years ago as a champion of progress, holds his court there and dreams foolish dreams. It was Chang Chih-tung who, with the defunct Viceroy Liu K'un yi, made the Yangtsze compact of 1900 when the game in the North was practically lost; and since then, as the missionary party have smiled upon him and courted him, it is freely imagined that he is a fit and competent person to lead real and lasting reform in China. And yet Chang Chih-tung's administration of two provinces, Hupeh and Hunan, has been so foolish and unbusiness-like that he can never be allowed to resign, excepting pressure is put upon the Chinese Government, nor can he ever be transferred to another satrapy, because there is no Chinese official who would take over the responsibility of making good the deficits which to-day cripple this provincial administration. It is true that Chang Chih-tung has done what he has done because he thought it meant progress. He has built great iron-works at Hanyang; an enormous mint where copper and silver coins are turned out night and day with no regard to the requirements of the country, but only to the making of minting profits; he has erected

cotton mills and other factories, and has succeeded in spending such vast sums that all is now crippled for want of funds. Now he is exhausting his energies in attempting to obtain the Nanking appointment, so that he may be able to wipe out the many loans which are outstanding. Alone, Chang Chih-tung's troops, German-drilled and Mauser-armed, make a brave show on parade; but they have been drilled and armed because their organiser is becoming more and more anti-foreign, and, with growing age, hating with a growing hatred the foreigner and his works — the foreigner who is pushing in slowly but irresistibly, and who, divided up into rival camps, is yet but one man in one object — which is the changing of the whole face of China because such a process is a paying business.

And in no other part of the world could a better place, a better strategic position for biting into China, be found than Hankow. The place known as Hankow is no single city, but a triple city whose aggregate of inhabitants is supposed to be more than two million natives. On the left or northern bank of the Yangtsze is Hankow, with its fast-growing European settlements spreading out for several miles along the river-bank. Pushing close to it, the native city of Hankow ends only with the river Han, which enters the Yangtsze a couple of thousand yards above the foreign town. Then immediately on the other bank of the Han is the city of Hanyang, with Pagoda Hill towering above it, and a great city spreading out everywhere it can

without falling into the water. In this Hanyang city are the iron and steel works, the arsenal and explosive factories, huge establishments employing many thousands of men supervised by a handful of foreigners, of whom continentals are the majority. In the steel works there is a giant Siemens-Martin furnace, a Bessemer furnace, a big steel rail mill, and other plants. From the adjacent Ping-hsiang coal-mines fuel comes by the thousand tons, carried all the way by water. From the Tieh Shan mines iron ore pours in, making the works independent of all foreign supplies. At the Government arsenal there is a splendidly appointed rifle-factory turning out the most modern Mauser rifles by the thousand; a big gun factory where everything down to the last screw is made; a powder mill where gun-cotton and every modern high explosive can be produced in limitless quantities. In Hanyang, the Viceroy is preparing all that is necessary to arm the Yangtsze; in Wuchang he is minting night and day to make profits to pay for it all.

Across the broad river is this third city — Wuchang, with its Viceregal Yamens, its brigades of modern troops, its Westernised schools and its ancient Viceroy. Along the Wuchang river front another European Settlement, authorised by Imperial decree, is also springing up, and red-brick buildings and neatly made wharves line the water.

Shut in by the immense Chinese cities the European has managed to secure for himself a

narrow foothold on this most chosen of spots, and now, backed by his various Governments, he will make yet greater efforts to extend his hold, — each race hoping that the big slices will finally be theirs.

Climb up to the top of Pagoda Hill and survey from there the scene of all this activity and rival ambitions. Below, the triple city, with its teeming millions, blackens three irregular patches. Between, beyond, and behind, is nothing but water; first the magnificent Yangtsze, here more than a mile wide though it is six hundred miles from its mouth; then the canal-like Han River; to the north-west and south-west enormous lakes and lagoons in limitless and glittering expanse. Farther on you divine more rivers, more canals, and more creeks — only water, nothing but water; and on them countless boats and junks sailing and *yulohing* in every direction proclaim the greatness of river power. From far and from near men and merchandise are pushing in slowly to this central point and claiming its hospitality. Already the Chinese have realised what this spot will be in a very few years, and speculators are eagerly buying up land and houses. And as the setting sun paints everything in flaming colours, and the cloudless skies turn beautiful blood-reds and divine pinks, you see everybody still busy although night is coming on. The soil is clay-red, the vegetation Nile-green; for with such abundance of water nothing can languish even in the great heat; and where there is abundant water there is abundant rice.

Far beyond Hankow you may voyage another thousand miles up the river mostly by junk, until Chungking is reached in the heart of Szechuen province. So far Szechuen has only been reached commercially by following the Yangtsze; but from their Tonking frontier the French are steadily at work in the South, and the day may not be as far off as people expect when railways leading up from Yunnan province may tear from Hankow the handling of the trade from the upper river. Beyond Ichang, which is four hundred miles farther up than this, swirling rapids make steam navigation an impossibility; and the clumsy junks hauled by immense bamboo cables, which must spend so many weeks on the journey, are the only means of reaching Western China. Railways may therefore have a chance even against Chinese waters, and if the Franco-Belgian groups can manage to obtain control of the Canton railway, as they have of the Peking, railways will play as important a part as water has in the past in opening up this country. On the great river itself the Germans have proclaimed that they have now equal rights with ourselves, and are attempting to bring Shantung and their Kiaochow colony into direct rail communication with this Yangtsze waterway. Each nationality now posted in Hankow can survey its dreams from the top of this Pagoda Hill; from many points of the compass they reach out towards this place.

Below, a yellow-painted steamer hoots as she

swings into the anchorage; farther on are the hump-backed railway bridges of the trunk line that is already nearing completion; the trumpets of the Viceroy's troops ring out; China and non-China are each working steadfastly away, and no one can say which will finally win. In any case Hankow is a place which in five or ten years will be well known all the world over, and in twenty-five will be one of the most important trading places in Asia.

CHAPTER III

SOME DISCOURSE ON THE CHINAMAN

To most people the Chinaman is mainly a person with a pigtail. Sometimes observers as gifted as Lord Curzon have done him the honour of setting him down as belonging to an unlovely but admirable people, but this is somewhat rare. In the main he still appears the curious creature of the Canton tea and opium days, and the many classes, varieties, species, and even peoples into which he may be divided are things quite ignored.

And yet, though possessing none of the picturesqueness of the races of India, and but far less of their diversity, the Chinese are a many-sided people who have travelled very far in many ways, have assimilated as many nations as Russia, and even to-day to the initiated show the signs of all these things. Let us recapitulate from another point of view what has been told in the Historical Prologue to this book.

When the early Chinese fathers moved to the Far East they first reached, as has already been shown, the old province of Shensi, at the head-

waters of the Yellow River. To the north of them must have been horsemen tribes, for this is the horse country; to the south, flat-chested aborigines of the Annamite type who were water-travelling people. Looking about him with his shrewd eyes, the early Chinese, pushing forward along the line of least resistance, made due east to the sea. Presently he stood on the shores of the Yellow Sea, and with his numbers largely reinforced by the flux of time, was soon able to move a little north, and also a little south. From the Yellow River belt, already his very own, he pushed forward his colonies of thrifty people, gaining the country and bringing it under his sway merely foot by foot. This was very long ago.

Later he had approached so close to the Father of all Far Eastern Waters, the Great Yangtsze, that he saw that water must take the place of roads. The Chinaman, who in the first instance must have known but little of such things, became henceforth a fresh-water sailor, and in the quiet ages of long ago possessed himself of a skill in handling heavy boats and manœuvring them through all difficulties, which is to-day the admiration of the European naval officer. Having reached and passed south of the Yangtsze, he could make but little progress for many centuries. The original inhabitants of the country whom he had driven south by his gradual advance were concentrating in the mountains and difficult lands of Central China, whilst to the far north the horsemen tribes, living on bitter plains

exposed to the scorching heat of summer suns and the death-like cold of winter blizzards, looked with increasing envy and growing hostility on these fat colonies of industrious men and women who throve so much. These were the days when China was the land of Sinim — very ancient even among ancient countries.

Presently the northern pest became more and more threatening, and the Chinese throne, which perhaps was founded on early Babylonian traditions, and which had grown with the growth of the people, saw that steps must be taken to separate the peaceful colonies from the marauding tribes of the North. Thousands of years ago walls too feeble to resist the elements were begun in the mountains to the north of Shensi and Shansi, and twenty-two centuries ago the Great Wall of China itself, which stands defiant to this day, was erected by a resolute Emperor.

Meanwhile the growth of the early settlements from little colonies into vast provinces had seen philosophers, inventors, poets, and great men born and die. At least two or three thousand years ago the early Chinese had reached the point Europe attained after the Renaissance. The Southern provinces, left untouched for many centuries, now saw Chinese adventurers sailing round by sea from Yangtsze, thus avoiding the mountains, and pushing resolutely into hostile places. These adventurers, the forerunners of a gradual invasion, established themselves in Fuhkien, in Kwangtung, in Kwangsi, and

far down into Annam and Cochin China, bringing with them their customs and their civilisation. In time these men married native wives, and were in sufficient numbers to establish independent principalities by virtue of their superior intelligence; and thus very slowly and gradually the Chinaman assimilated all tribes and nations almost down to the Red River.

In this wise the Middle Kingdom, the centre of the world, arose and grew richer and richer. Sometimes internal dissensions snapped off whole satrapies from the control of the Chinese throne and led to the establishment of separate principalities. But in the end such temporary revolts, lasting perhaps for decades and perhaps for centuries, collapsed, and the Emperor, Son of Heaven, once more came to his own.

It was not until very modern times, a thousand years or so ago, that the horsemen tribes had grown sufficiently strong and numerous to break through the artificial and natural barriers which separated them from their prey. Then Kin and Kitan Tartars poured in and penetrated all North China. For a long time they were continually flung back, but at last owing to their military virtues they established themselves in the form of kingdoms on Chinese soil, and marrying Chinese virgins began that mixing of blood which, together with the climatic action, has made of the northern Chinese the hardiest people it is possible to find. After Manchurian Tartars came the Mongols, who swept all over China like a

wave, and for a few short decades ruled with an iron military rule. Then their strength was broken, and once more the Chinese people reasserted themselves. For three centuries the outer north, Mongolia and Manchuria, decimated by all these bloody wars, was content to let China Proper alone; but in the seventeenth century the modern Manchus, feeling their growing strength, began to strike at the Chinese settlers, who, marvellous people, had already flooded half Southern Manchuria. The struggle ended in the seating of the Manchus on the Peking Throne, and in the establishment of the firmest rule China has ever known. Determined not to fall as the many other Tartars who had come before them had fallen, the Manchus took a master step: they allowed themselves to be assimilated by the Chinese, and soon became more Chinese than the natives themselves in their conservatism and haughtiness.

The few Europeans who had reached China and lived for a space in the Middle Kingdom before the nineteenth century were either Catholic Missionaries, carrying a knowledge of the faith in fear and trembling to a people who had but little desire for any religion but their ancestor-worship and Buddhistic and Taoist ceremonies at death, or else were a handful of pirate-like traders nibbling at the Kuangtung and Fuhkien ports. The Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch had preceded the English. Then after the East India Company had obtained a trading charter from their King, it began to de-

stroy the monopoly in Far Eastern trade which the earliest-comers, these Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch, thought they possessed; but for many decades this trade was very trifling.

When the British rule in India became more firm, and, on the one hand, the Chinese liking for opium, and on the other the English liking for steaming dishes of tea, created a demand which it was but natural to supply, the trade became more and more considerable, until it was respectable and important. It was, however, confined to the single port of Canton in the south; and, excepting from a knowledge gained by sailing clumsily up and down a muddy river in the trading brigs and schooners of the day, and by talking a queer English to a few hundred natives congregated round the old-time factories, no one learnt anything worth knowing about China or the Chinese. The country was still a sealed book.

Then came the various wars and collisions which finally ended with the Treaty of Nanking and the establishment of Anglo-Chinese relations for the first time in history on a firm basis. Five ports were opened to European trade, and the swing of the pendulum carried the European as far north as the mouth of the Yangtsze, which is only about half-way up the vast coast line, but was then counted Northern China. The real North was still quite unknown.

The pioneer Englishmen brought with them their Cantonese from the South, the Annamite-Chinese of the old days; and these having been trained to the

foreigners' ways by many decades of factory intercourse, taught the other natives the European point of view. For many years the Cantonese was alone deemed worthy to officiate as servant or business go-between between the white man and those of the newly tapped provinces. Journeying from Shanghai up canals to the rich cities of Kiangsu and Chehkiang, European eyes looked on buildings and artificial landscapes that Marco Polo had extolled six centuries before. Almost nothing had changed. Close upon the 'sixties of the nineteenth century the wars with the Chinese Government re-commenced. The Anglo-French Allies finally marched on Peking accompanied by hosts of Cantonese camp-followers, and beheld for the first time the immense Tartar walls, the dry country with its giant crops of kiaoliang standing ten feet high, the great teams of mules and ponies harnessed to indestructible carts, the tall bronzed people. All this was quite different from Southern and even Central China, for the latter are the "water road" (*shui lu*) country, whilst the real North has nothing but dust-laden highways.

The wars ended by finding the European six hundred miles farther north at Tientsien and Newchwang and six hundred miles up the great river, the Yangtsze. China was at last in a fair way of being opened.

The quiet years which followed saw Chinese and Europeans alike trained to the new conditions. The Chinese, taught at the open ports by Cantonese

whom they themselves regarded as strangers, learnt many things about the foreigner. The Europeans, no longer forced to rely upon the ancient accounts of Romish fathers for their knowledge of things Celestial, began to understand something of the vast Empire which was being slowly eaten into. Men crawled slowly by boat or by cart all over the interior and listened to the many dialects of the open-mouthed Chinese crowds; whilst Chinese travellers being assured that the *huo-lun ch'uan*, or old paddle-wheel steamers, carried quickly and reliably, began to come and go from open-port to open-port. Progress, however, was very slow when there were no wars, for wars are the great educators of the East. The French affair of 1884 was too small to teach much, and so from the 'sixties to the 'eighties the changes came about very slowly. But in spite of this by now the Cantonese had almost finished his school-master work, and was being rapidly pushed out by the men of other provinces who began to understand the foreigner. The use of English, the *lingua franca* of the East, had spread far and wide; everybody along the string of sea-ports and river-ports could jabber sufficient *pidgin* to be understood, except in the real North, where they are slow of speech and very simple. Progress was therefore being made.

It required the series of collisions and disturbances, of which the Chino-Japanese war was the first, to make clear how far the old conditions had

ceased to exist and what a gulf separated China and the Chinese of the early nineteenth century from China and the Chinese of the century-end. It is true the Chinaman still appeared mainly as a pig-tailed person, but his ways were no longer so dark — at least to the growing European communities posted strategically along two thousand miles of coast and fifteen hundred miles of river. Nor could the fact be lost sight of that the exact relations existing between province and province, officials and people, north and south, east and west, presented as many different aspects as, say, those of a country like Austria. Journeying up from the single open port, Canton, in less than half a century the whole of China had been laid bare and the country explored until every nook and corner had been visited.

Until the 'sixties it was the European who had been trained in the south of China, and therefore possessed a warped point of view, who was the authority on the Chinese question. Not until a new generation of men had grown up, trained in Peking and the north of China, could the Chinese official point of view be properly understood and the provinces and their inhabitants grouped in a proper manner. Such masterly books as Mayer's *Chinese Government*, Smith's *Chinese Characteristics* and *Village Life* were only possible because the North had been reached and the days of dismal old-school literature finished. Then it was fully realised, perhaps almost for the first time, why there had been

A Chinese City in the Canal Country.

A River which will feed the Railway.

[*Face page* 98, *Vol. I.*

such difficulty in crushing the Taiping rebellion; why the coming of the European had been viewed with such hostility, and why the slow but steady movement north from Canton until Peking was finally reached, had struck such consternation and dismay into the hearts of the ruling caste, the Manchus.

For China was most loosely governed, and it was the Chinaman in his village, or on his boat, or toiling on the highways of the Empire, who alone remained vigorous. The Government, isolated for so many centuries from all contact with the outer world except from tribute nations, had allowed the foreign relations which had existed to be almost entirely commercial relations, conducted by arrangement through the provincial authorities and through native merchants' Guilds, who alone knew the great strength of the new-comers. The Government itself was content to carry on its real business, the fatherly control of the Chinese people, without much regard for anything else, until it woke up some time very near the end of the nineteenth century to discover, not only that the foreigner was the real question, but that the people — its very own people whom it professed to govern so wisely — had grown away from it. For, around the now numerous sea and river ports and the country adjoining them, a population running into millions existed which was directly or indirectly interested in the European and his commerce, and which *nolens volens* was becoming in certain respects Europeanised. The discovery was

an astounding one, and accounts to some extent for the readiness with which a large portion of the Manchu Court openly sided with the Boxers, and advocated the driving of the foreigner and his works out of China at all costs. And by this phrase "the foreigner and his works," not only was the European included but also all Chinese who were directly or indirectly interested in him. The Boxers boldly divided the white man and his adherents into classes. *Ta-Mao-tzu*, or "long-haired ones of the first class," were the Europeans themselves; *Erh-Mao-tzu*, or "secondary long-haired ones," were the Christian converts; and finally *San-Mao-tzu* were all those who were in any way connected with the foreigner, or even those who appeared so on account of their European proclivities. This alone is sufficient to show the immense strides made in a cycle of Cathay — the sixty years between the first Nanking Treaty and the Boxer Year. And the fact that the contemptuous nickname *Mao-tzu* implied those without the shaved Manchu forehead is another proof that the European and his adherents were to be classed as quasi-rebels — rebels against the ancient institutions and ancient customs of the Empire who had been tolerated for a certain time, but who would finally be dealt with in the same manner as the Taipings had been treated.

This last revolt was therefore of the highest importance. It showed clearly that even the most bigoted Chinese of the old school realised that the time had come when not only must some stop be

put to the partition of the Empire — which had commenced, according to them, by the leases of the year 1898 — but that it was just as important to put a stop to the disintegrating processes at work on the whole masses of the Chinese population. According to them, there was great danger that the village and the family system, through which the Central Government maintained its hold on the people, would end by being destroyed through the individualistic tendencies brought into existence by the European. In that destruction would perish also the city and the guild — mere extensions of the primitive units. For all China is merely a mass of villages, which have sometimes grown into towns, and have then been surrounded at some remote period with high walls to protect them from armed robbery and countryside rebellions; while the guild is merely an extension of the family co-operative system, in which each person's relation to every other person occupies a dynamic position. By intruding itself within these co-operative institutions, under which the welfare of the individual must be sacrificed to the welfare of the community, the Chinese Government had slowly built up its power — a power which it maintained by equipoise or the playing off one set or combination of interests against another. This entire structure was now threatened by the European. According to the European's creed and arguments, the individual was the unit and nothing greater could be a unit; and with the prospect of 430 millions,

which is the population of China to-day, coming to this conclusion, it is not surprising that there should have been some fear. It has not yet been realised how greatly the family and ancestor-linked system of China has already been eaten into by the direct and indirect efforts of missionaries, merchants, and foreign wars. Just as in Russia, so in China the village-system is destined to be slowly but irresistibly destroyed, and as yet it is not clear what is to take its place.

The old China was therefore passing away with the end of the nineteenth century. Chinese, it is true, were themselves but little conscious of the changes through which they were passing. They quoted just as glibly that if you are rich, you must have a cook from Canton, where the preparations of puppy dogs and kindred culinary triumphs have long been the pride of the Empire; that to be happy you must marry the women of Soochow where the pretty girls come from; that to live well you must go to Hangchow, which is the *Côte d'Azur* of the eighteen provinces; and that, finally, when you are about to die it is best to speed to Yangchow, where the wood is splendid and the coffins are made wonderfully thick. But they quoted these things, living in foreign settlements such as those of Shanghai, where they enjoyed comforts and a privacy unknown in the old days; they were pleased to eat a cooking which is not the orthodox cooking of China; to marry wives or concubines who had a *penchant* for Houbigant's scent, European liqueurs,

and American candy; and to see and know that the coffins in which they would finally be buried would be fashioned of wood from Oregon or Korea. Of course only a handful of China's many millions could afford such things, but the handfuls were becoming handfuls stationed at very many points all over the Empire; and when the many millions of China have finished their day's work they have nothing much to do in the way of amusements except stand about and talk to one another. In this way an eternal *causerie* goes endlessly on, and has ended by making most of the millions fully cognisant of the new things and of the new life.

For in many provinces there is scarcely a village which has not somebody away working on a railway, or on a steamer, or in a factory, or in some way connected with a set of factors unknown half a century ago. And when one man from a village goes, another soon says he wants to go too; and as soon as wife, mother, and grandmother have been mollified by the promises of what he will be able to give when he comes back — for the women here play just as dominant a part as they do in every other corner of the world — another Chinaman is tramping away with a bundle on his back, or is being *yulohed* down a creek on an over-crowded junk. That Chinaman will never be quite the same man again. In some prefectures almost half the able-bodied males are away the greater part of the year. When the Russians were undisturbed in Manchuria, they must have been directly employing forty or fifty thousand

men from the three Shantung prefectures of Tengchou-fu, Laichou-fu, and Ichou-fu — a big handful to learn so quickly something of the European's ways.

With the passage of all this time and the opportunities which have gradually grown up for visiting and examining the entire country from the only true point of view — the Peking point of view — China is seen in a very different light from that of half a century ago. It is understood now very well that it is the North which dominates every other part of the Empire; that it is not the Cantonese, as everyone thought, who are the best traders and the most hard-headed people, but the men of Chehkiang; that the women's feet are bound, not to prevent them from wandering forth, but for sensuous reasons; that China, although very rich, is also very poor; and that the Manchus are no longer a power in the country. And these are only a few items in the new knowledge.

Surveying the whole country from Peking, China speedily falls into three grand natural divisions: the dry North, the Yangtsze belt, and the Southern Provinces. The dry North includes six provinces — Chihli, Shantung, Shansi, Shensi, Kansu, and Honan — and feels itself under the immediate control of Peking, in whose councils the Tientsien Viceroy's voice is very powerful. It is the country of pony and mule traffic, with great teams of animals straining perpetually at the shafts of clumsy but unbreakable carts. It grows no wet rice, but crops of grain and

A Chinese Venice.

Along the Grand Canal.

[*Face page* 105, *Vol.*

small millet on which the population feeds. Its climate is dry, very dry indeed, and the fierce summer sun which continually shines bronzes the people until they are many shades darker than those from the damp provinces, and are not unlike certain natives of India. In winter it is cold as death itself, and great hurricanes of northerly winds sweep over the country, chilling man and beast until they cannot move. There is but little spring, and by May the winter cold is only exchanged for a burning dry heat which sends the thermometer above one hundred degrees. During July the rainy season sets in, and swamping rains fall on the country, turning the thick dust into a thicker mud. The people are bigger, stronger, rougher, but far more simple than any other Chinese, for in their veins there is much mixed blood, springing rather from warlike than from trading peoples. Moreover, in the north-west the Mohammedans are very numerous. In Kansu alone there are millions of them. It is this block of northern country, so often overrun and subdued by Mongol and Manchurian peoples, which now controls the former conquerors. Three-quarters of Manchuria has been settled by settlers from North China, and the Mongols have many garrisons and trading communities of these men settled amongst them. The northern Chinaman, venturing beyond his six provinces to the south, finds himself among men who understand him less and less the farther he goes away from home, until he is understood not at all. So he does not go much to the south, but migrates

farther north, where he finds people more simple even than he is. He speaks a clean-sounding dialect, which is the official language of the Empire, and is admired as much as the Hanoverian German in the Kaiser's domains. His is the Roman language in the Tuscan mouth.

In the Yangtsze regions also six provinces must be reckoned, but with a seventh, Chehkiang, added, because it pushes so close to the great estuary that all its cities have canalised waterways connecting them with the River. The six provinces of the North have at most 130,000,000 inhabitants; but the six Yangtsze provinces, Kiangsu, Anhui, Kiangsi, Hunan, Hupeh, and Szechuan, with Chehkiang added, have far more than 200,000,000 congregated near the waters of the great River. Tributaries, canals, creeks, and shallow lakes make it possible for everyone to reach the Yangtsze itself by water from the most distant points of this vast belt of country. Over hundreds of thousands of square miles the rich and never ending rice crops stand ankle-deep in water, fearing floods more than droughts, for of water there is always more than a surfeit. This great region has always been the belly of the Empire; and so in very ancient times the dominant North built canals stretching from the Gates of Peking to the Yangtsze, and exacted tribute in kind which, journeying slowly week after week by clumsy junk, was finally deposited at the feet of the Emperors.

The latitude of these regions is marked on the

faces and speech of these people. As you pass, coming from the north, from Honan into Hupeh, or from Shantung into Anhui, the chocolate-brown faces are exchanged for a half-bronzed yellow, proclaiming that from a bone-dry climate you are reaching a semi-damp one which bleaches rather than tans; whilst the speech which was clear and distinct becomes more and more slurring and watery. It is still the official or mandarin dialect, but each mile farther south you go shreds off more of the gutturals and adds softer labials. Around the basin of the Yangtsze itself the gutturals have entirely disappeared, and the Chehkiang Chinese are even laughed at by everybody else as having women's voices. The cracking whip and the teams of fettlesome mules and ponies are here unknown, for water has taken the place of the road, and of highways there is no trace excepting the wheel-barrow and sedan-chair tracks which do not deserve such a name. The human draught-animal has entirely displaced the mule and the pony, and man-power is here everything.

Going due west from the mouth of the Yangtsze, a thousand miles or more, you note that the harmlessness and women-like qualities of the men disappear more and more, until in Hunan, which is far away, a restless and determined race is met. Whilst you could dominate the tens of millions of the lower Yangtsze with a few thousand men, many more would be required to penetrate the districts of the middle and upper Yangtsze. This is proved by the

course of the Taiping rebel armies. Sweeping up from Kwangtung half a century ago, Hunan beat them due east until they settled on the defenceless people of the lower Yangtsze. A few regiments of Indian troops could garrison a hundred thousand miles of the lower Yangtsze country, but a hundred thousand men would not suffice for Hunan.

Finally there is Southern China, in which a people of difficult speech and truculent temper, in all truth a detestable people, are gathered. In the five provinces of Fuhkien, Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Kweichau, and Yunnan, there are strange breeds of men who are but half-Chinese in their origin. If you are dismayed at the dialects of Kwangtung and Kwangsi, it is nothing to what you experience in Fuhkien. No Chinese excepting the natives of this province can acquire the dialects of the region, and there is no Chinese but will hold up his hands in horror when you mention this "bird-chattering" language. In Fuhkien as in Kwangtung and the other provinces, the Chinese have assimilated the original inhabitants, whose ugly features are now perpetuated in the faces of nominal Chinese. The skinny necks, the Simian mouths, and the out-turned feet are the marks of the beast, which can never be entirely eradicated and speak of breeds of men lower than the Annamite. Chinese licentiousness is also at its height in the southern provinces, because there has been much breeding in the dim past with inferior races, and because the climate is worse. The southern coast is the old pirate coast which the

Manchus have never thoroughly comprehended; it is the land of stink-pots and dastardly attacks on the sailing ships of former days. Southern China does not contain much of the true Chinaman. It has mixed so many peoples in its pot that the vices of the half-caste and quarter-caste are uppermost, and superstition holds sway with a strength it does not possess elsewhere.

Such are the Chinese peoples of to-day. They are making immense progress, considering the difficulties which have to be overcome, and are already twenty years ahead of their Government. At the open ports individualism, that immense force, is showing itself more and more, and breaking up slowly but irresistibly collectivism and the effete family system. Hundreds of articles of luxury are being used more and more; the Chinese woman now being liberated, is demanding more and more attention, and is exerting the same influence in the cause of progress as other women have done elsewhere. Vanity and the hurry to get rich are rapidly breaking down old barriers. In ten years' time the people will be fifty years ahead of their Government. In twenty years, when all the railways are complete, Chinese public opinion will force the Government into wholesale reform, or will so discredit it that it will disappear, to be replaced by another system. It behoves England, who has brought about directly or indirectly eighty per cent. of all this peaceful revolution among the biggest population of any country in the world, to hasten with all the means in her power this up-building of

the new — remembering that this admirable but unlovely race are the best creditors in the world, and that every effort, every act, and every help will be one day repaid with a rate of interest which is now unobtainable on such good security even among the most Christian Powers.

CHAPTER IV

ON THE HANKOW-PEKING RAILWAY

HANKOW has three railway stations: *Gare du Han*, Hankowville, and *Gare fluviale* — I give the names as they stand so that you may realise that British influence and interests cease once you are off the river-front, and that those Powers who have no business on the Yangtsze are already very important. *Gare du Han* is away to the west with the rails almost falling into the Han River. Around this station many hundreds of thousands of francs are being spent in filling in swamps and making solid bundings; and from here loading and unloading from river to railway, and *vice versâ*, can be carried on from native boats. Hankowville is at the back of the foreign Settlements — to be exact, just behind the French Settlement — and, marking kilometre 5 from the Han River station, is where you and all European travellers mount your train. *Gare fluviale*, five kilometres farther on, is ear-marked as the great future goods terminus, where in the middle of the French-Belgian railway settlement mountains of cargo will be run down in trucks to the river-

banks and loaded into non-British steamers. It is well to understand these things at the beginning.

The hour of starting is matutinal to say the least, and you must be up betimes. Therefore at five I was awake, at six I was ready packed, and long before seven I had successfully missed my train. Trusting to the Hankow rickshaw coolie to trundle me right, I had merely gazed about me and meditated on the political situation. The coolie, unburdened by such thoughts, ran cheerfully enough, after the Chinese manner, over building materials and all other things, animate and inanimate, which were still yawning on the ground. I merely noted that the road appeared no easy one. Progressing resolutely, the time sped pleasantly in the freshness of dewy morning, and all thoughts of trains soon disappeared. After some time the thought slowly pressed on my subconsciousness that the coolie was merely cheerful and not gifted with a knowledge of localities; and therefore, moved by my referring to his progenitors in deprecatory terms, he was pleased to change his direction and run more blithely than ever. Expostulating with him once more, I drew from him the knowledge that he knew not whither he was going, and that he was only hunting out the train after the manner of his kind. In China it is but natural to go without knowing where you are going; is there not always the assembled populace from which to draw all details?

It was finally a very heated and enraged draught-animal who reached the railway embankment — for

from the comfort of my seat I had revenged myself beyond retort after the native manner — but alas! the train had disappeared, and with it my baggage. I reached the station, which as yet merely consists of a little wooden box in which are telephone and telegraph, and was met by a perplexed but obliging native staff. My men, also after the manner of their kind, had gone forward with cheerfulness, carrying from me my baggage and my traps — should they ring up *Gare fluviale* and stop them? The railway telephone clanged and buzzed, and one Monsieur Morusse was implored to *faire descendre mes bagages*. French is the official language of the railway, and the native railway staff, recruited from Roman Catholic Missionary Schools, are forced to use the Gallic tongue in all official business. At length Morusse, who, whatever he might be in the flesh, possessed an admirably rolling *r*, rasped back his answer. My men had been dragged from the train; I was saved. The native crowd, ever cheerful and full of information, told me how it had occurred; and as an ancient dame was more voluble than the rest, I singled her out and paid to her the rickshaw fare. Then, secure in the knowledge that I had sown the seeds of a fruit which would not fail to bring joy, I moved away to the sound of a dispute in which the vociferations of rickshaw coolie and mob made the air shake.

In the little station-box the Chinese station-master and his assistants were collected, and from them many small things were gathered concerning

the methods of Belgian railway officials. Presently the four Mauser-armed soldiers of the Viceroy's troops, who are stationed at every station along the line "to protect the foreigner," came in too — smart-looking men in khaki and straw hats drilled after the German drill. But they confessed that though they had their rifles and bayonets, no ammunition was ever served out to them, and that it was their moral influence which was counted on to do all the work. Two of the men had fought in Manchuria, one had been on the Tonking frontier. The Chinaman is a true mercenary.

Leaving half-an-hour afterwards, I discovered that the crowd had melted away; there was merely the railway track curving away in solitary grandeur from the top of its commanding embankment. Below the embankment, but placed strategically so that he might immediately catch my eye, the rickshaw coolie sat simulating an ever recurring sob with some theatrical excellence; and from his attitude the whole story was told. The old woman, as all old women do in China, had won and quietly disappeared. I walked past gazing skywards; the rickshaw coolie, esteeming that his frontal attack had failed, got up quietly and placed the rickshaw tentatively at my feet. His tears had vanished so suddenly that no man might say where they had come from, and soon he was speeding back telling every passer-by, after the engaging Chinese manner, as much of the affair as the state of the road would permit, adding — lyingly — that I was now paying

him double. Such is the Chinaman — all-conquering in peace if not in war.

Another day dawned and the train now bore me safely north. At *Gare fluviale*, which is kilometre 10 and the future goods terminus, a miniature town after the manner of the Manchurian railway towns is already rising. There is a hotel, new shops, private houses, and the commencement of streets. And behind the station and running right down to the banks of the Yangtsze are many double tracks. Around here oil tanks are being established; tank cars have arrived from Europe, and soon kerosene oil, for which the demand in China grows from year to year, will be steaming up to the North rapidly by rail — kerosene oil that has been pumped from wells into pipes, from pipes into tank steamer, and has then come to China; and now an identical unloading operation will be conducted in the heart of the country which will open up for the trade new channels.

Not much time, however, was left to look about. A khaki-clad Belgian locomotive inspector, note-book in hand, swung himself aboard, a brand new engine was coupled on, and away we went. It was to be my first taste of the methods in vogue on this line. As soon as we got the straight, the scenery flicked past quicker and quicker, and the inspector, note-book in hand, marked the kilometre stones with his stop-watch. Thirty-five kilometres, forty-five, fifty, fifty-five, sixty; in less than ten minutes we were running at sixty kilometres an hour and more, over

a road bed that did not justify thirty. But the important part appeared to be to establish the speed of the locomotive and nothing else. Several times we jumped so high on the rails that I prepared for the worst; but each time providence came to our rescue and we duly skirted the inviting paddy-fields that waited all ready below to receive our mutilated corpses. But as we travelled north in this entertaining fashion, resigning ourselves to the inevitable, there was ample time to observe the passengers, the freight, and many other things.

Beyond Hankow for nearly one hundred miles, as you head almost due north, the country is the ordinary rice and cotton country, rich and productive in the highest degree and therefore possessing plenty of raw stuffs for export. The land is low-lying, however, and very liable to flooding, but during 1904 (when I write), which has been a year of plenty for the entire Far East — there have been not only no floods but the blazing sun has beaten down so fiercely that only irrigation and some torrential rains have saved the situation. Away to the east, which is towards the China Seas, hills rise occasionally above the rolling distance, only to collapse again in their vain struggle against these vast alluvial plains. Not until you reach the boundary line between Hupeh and Honan provinces does the aspect of the country change. Then hills that have been timidly rising and shrinking away become more and more menacing. They no longer raise their crests only to the East; they appear on every

PROVINCIAL SOLDIERY BRIGAND HUNTING.

A STATION ON THE HANKOW-PEKING RAILWAY.

[*Face page* 116, *Vol. I.*

side, but more especially directly in front of the iron-way, and finally culminate in a mountain range, sometimes called the Feng-shui-ling, which cuts off the Yangtsze regions and Hupeh province from richer Honan.

At each railway station the four railway guards detached from Viceroy Chang Chih-tung's foreign-drilled troops stand at attention as the train steams in, and sometimes, when the humour seizes them, even present arms. The station buildings are not much to look at — in fact they are rather deplorable, and consist of white-plastered houses built of rough bricks, which call aloud the foolish economy exercised in the matter. The staff is always the same: a French-speaking Chinese station-master with golden dragons running up his sleeves, and a whistle in his hand; native switchman and ticket-office men and a crowd of coolies. And in addition to the squad of soldiers there is a species of red-coated Chinese railway police, paid by the railway company, but recruited by the Chinese authorities. Armed with heavy cudgels, these men are often requested by the Belgian guard on the train to wield their sticks on the native passengers; and being but ignorant men they readily accede. Fortunately I was travelling with a Chinese police-magistrate from the Wuchang Viceroy's Yamen, who was going up to investigate just such a case of unjustifiable assault by the railway police, which had taken place at the instigation of the European conductor. A respectable Chinese had been pulled

off a train a few days before for no reason that could be ascertained, had been badly beaten, and in addition had had his queue half torn from his head. Being a man of substance he had raised his countryside, and things had looked so ugly that the Viceroy had to step in and order a special investigation. The police-magistrate was voluble and communicative in the vernacular. How could there be any real progress and reform while such events were continually occurring? he asked. The railway problem is certainly a new and difficult one for China to manage, since the flooding of the interior with ignorant and brutal Europeans, belonging to nationalities which do not understand how to deal with Eastern peoples, may bring about fresh disturbances some day.

Meanwhile, native passengers with their piles of *impedimenta*, and their endless ticket disputes, tumbled off or clambered on in great numbers as we reached stations a few dozen miles north of Hankow. The train was the ordinary mixed train invented on the British-controlled Peking-Tientsien-Shanhaikwan line — a second-class carriage, a couple of third-class, and many ordinary goods wagons for fourth-class open-air travellers. In such trucks native men and women, and boxes and cases, were piled indiscriminately, and all but a few richer natives patronised this cheap method of travel. On the road we passed long lines of trucks piled high with merchandise and building materials, and at many stations there was ample evidence that the goods

traffic on this trunk line will soon be very great and remunerative.

At noon we pulled up in front of some big engine sheds at the foot of the mountains. We had long ago stopped our sixty-kilometre speed and had been lolling forward at twenty an hour to save the track, which even on the sections near the Hankow terminus showed many signs of careless construction. Soon we were off again, the mountains closed in around us, and, rattling through the first tunnel, we had passed irrevocably from Hupeh province into Honan.

The scenery now changed. The first station at which we pulled up lay hidden in a narrow mountain valley, inexpressibly cool after the fierce heat of the Yangtsze, which had been left one hundred and fifty miles behind us. Rugged cliffs rose above us, vegetation was scant; and on the top of a mountain peak the ruined remains of a castellated keep pinned our attention. We were assuredly in Honan province, the province once over-run by brigand bands, and here perhaps, in this little-visited spot, had been the lair of an old-time *hunghutzu*, who must have been as safe from capture on his mountain-top as a Baron in his Rhine castle.

The train puffed, and we crawled up steep grades and slid snake-like down descending ones. At last the mountains smoothed away into hills, the hills in turn flattened out; rice-fields appeared again, drawing their cool irrigating water from hill-streams in gurgling trickles; and the heat, no longer shut

from us, struck once more as heavily as it could with its fast-sinking rays. We had reached the flat.

Suddenly I saw ahead of us the first sign of the North. The paddy-fields had become drier and drier, the trickle of water less and less; and then without other warning the first *kao-liang*, the tall waving millet of the North, appeared. It was the North, and the dry country where men eat hard grain instead of soft rice, because the latter cannot be profitably raised.

At the little stations the sedan-chairs still waited for possible fares; wheel-barrows were still there with their horrid screeching as their coolies rushed forward and clamoured for the attention of alighted passengers. It would not be long, however. In half-an-hour, at most, cart-tracks would appear with ponies, mules, and donkeys, those beautifully miscellaneous teams of which China possesses the monopoly, tugging laboriously at overladen carts with a perspiring driver shouting his driving directions by merely modulating his tones. Taking out my watch I timed it; twenty-three minutes after the first *kao-liang* fields, a bullock cart lumbered out of the tall grain and stood irresolutely alongside the high embankment. This means the North. It is good and profitable to know your China.

Thus, we sped on through the rich Honan with the shadows growing longer and longer. At eight p.m. we stopped for the night, with our locomotive screeching away to its primitive bed of straw matting, and the native passengers fighting their way in the

dark to the inns. There was but ten minutes' grace and then the second sight of the North in summer unwelcomely appeared. Suddenly, without any warning, a peal of thunder rang out crashingly; and before there was time to move from the railway carriage it commenced raining with the torrential rain which puts six inches of water on the ground in a single hour. Cold fare was therefore the order of the night. At six we were off again, and in three hours we had pulled up for the last time at the town of Yen Ch'eng. Ahead of us the iron track still swirled away in the distance, but the train service had ceased here; we had reached the end of *l'exploitation* or the sections open to traffic, and beyond was a *construction*, a very questionable thing, since no man knew when materials were going forward. It might be perhaps the day after, perhaps only in four or five days, for it was raining very heavily, and it would not do to injure the unballasted track, which was already in a deplorable state.

With this uninviting prospect facing me, I was rescued by a young Frenchman, stationed in exile at this lonely spot in charge of a *dépôt* belonging to one of the newly organised French firms in Hankow. Already, he told me, his house had established eight collecting-stations for country produce between Hankow and the Yellow River — eight establishments which were organising native collecting agencies at many points far away from the railway, all of which were affiliated to the eight branch establishments at the big centres, making it thus possible to tap

the country far and wide and commence controlling the raw export trade. And in this place there was an admirable illustration of the successful manner in which this is already working out.

A thousand yards from the station a broad but very shallow river flows from the west towards the east — a river which is navigable for several hundred miles and indeed actually connects in a tortuous fashion with the great Yangtsze itself. The rain having ceased we strolled down to the railway-bridge, and through the iron-girders gazed at the busy scene below. Many dozens of junks lay moored along what is to become a railway landing-stage, where cargo will be hoisted in and out by the aid of modern machinery. Now hundreds of coolies, dripping great beads of sweat from their trembling bodies, staggered up the gang-planks carrying bales of hides, sacks of grain, gall-nuts, sesamun seed, and many other things that had been brought far down from the hitherto inaccessible interior by boat. From here scores of carts were loaded up and went splashing away through the mud to where rough railway godowns offered a safe deposit for a few days. Thus the success of a station which has only been opened for a few short weeks is already assured. From places many hundreds of miles away cargo by the thousand ton is pouring in, the native merchants seizing only too eagerly the opportunity now being offered to them for conveying their goods to the great markets with a rapidity which has never before been possible. And this is but one little corner of Honan, which,

with the exception of one or two other provinces, probably possesses the richest soil in China. Between this point and the Yellow River there will be dozens of stations, and at all of them passengers and freight will soon be coming forward in a manner which will cause anguish to those English speculators who lost the opportunity which was theirs to secure the concession for this rich road.

It was here on this broad but treacherous river that I made another discovery — I saw a new genus of junk. There are many kinds of junks in China, from the huge lumbering sea-junk which looks like the galleons of other days, to the wasp-waisted river-junk which sails the great canals; but never have I seen such an one as these here. Briefly this was a double junk — a junk in two pieces which can split in two just as you chop a worm in half. 'Midships the junk is only chained together in a primitive way, and by releasing certain bolts it can be divided up into two halves, the stern floating one way and the stem another. It is when the water shoals that this strange invention becomes more than useful. Coming down-stream it often happens that the heavy junk "piles up" on some sand-bank and defies all efforts to float her off again, for here the water is counted by inches. Then it is only necessary to unchain the after-half, float it alongside the forrard and unload from one into another, until the first half, much lightened, can be pushed off, and after the re-chaining the journey resumed. Never before have I heard that one-half of a ship could become the

saviour of the other in this fashion; and once more it has been left to the Chinaman to invent such novel means. But the junkmen, squatting on their haunches, explained that it was really a dry country and not a water-country, and that therefore to navigate where there is seldom more than fifteen inches or twenty inches needs special measures; even in shallow-draught work you can teach the Chinaman but little. Before the railway had come these junks journeyed from the Far West down to the Yangtsze, taking half a year there and back. Now by unloading here and hurrying back they can make six or eight trips in the same time, and already the old trade channels are being disturbed and old towns are suffering. The railways are giving another death-blow to the old.

It was not for another forty-eight hours that a construction train finally went forward, and then after an hour's slow rocking and rolling we reached a town, Hsu-chou, beyond which it was not possible to go. The embankments had suffered so much from the rain that even the Belgian engine-drivers thought it more than their lives were worth to risk a further advance, and so I had to dismount.

Hsu-chou is three hundred miles and more from Hankow and has an important station half a mile beyond the Chinese city. Rows of plastered European bungalows and offices flank the station on one side; on the other are spacious machine shops, railway sheds, and great piles of materials. From here the chief construction-engineer and his staff

were directing operations at the railway head fifty miles to the North. Beyond that the great Yellow River bridge, which will be three kilometres long, is already being commenced. Seizing the opportunity offered, we mounted a trolley and sped forward at twenty miles an hour with our coolies driving us. Right up to the end of the rails there were ample signs that the Chinese are showing their appreciation of this new means of communication; for at every station near a town of importance native inns are going up, and godowns and sheds are being constructed in great numbers, thus making a new semi-foreign settlement flanked by railway embankments. Even on the construction trains crowds of Chinese manage to find places, and it is amply clear that the dividend-earning capacity of this line would turn European railway companies green with envy. Everything points to the fact that it is communication, and communication alone, which is needed to bring about great developments in the interior of China; and once taxation of goods *in transitu* — the detested *likin* — is removed, an expansion will take place of a phenomenal nature.

There being nothing more to see on the southern section of the railway, we made our way back to the native town of Hsu-chou. For there being no more rails, it is best to keep to the old roads and cross the great Yellow River after the proper manner, which is *viâ* the provincial capital Kaifengfu. The Yellow River divides this country in an astonishing fashion which must be understood.

CHAPTER V

A HUNDRED MILES BY CART

We had sought refuge in a dilapidated inn, and there in the midst of questionable surroundings had passed the time in sleep until the weather should improve, for the floods were descending again. In the afternoon the stamping mules aroused us; the rain-clouds had lifted and invited us without. "It is time," muttered one man; "if we wait it will rain again;" and my servitors, assenting, wrapped their heads in ugly travelling clouts so that the humours of the road might not molest them.

It was two in the afternoon. We had waited half the previous day and all the morning for the torrential rains to stop — those great summer rains of Eastern countries which pour from the heavens in protest at the great heat which oppresses them and make all travel impossible. It is true you can go forward by cart even in such weather if you so will; but it is dull and dreary watching the mule-teams splashing through the eternal pools of mud and water and sending great sprays of liquid filth high into the air. You must listen, too, to the carter's

muttered cursing as with sharp words he calls upon that egg of a tortoise to remember that the leader should strain forward and not stand snorting because a two-foot slough blocks the way. The old road jokes soon become wearisome with the thick mud-caking choking the cart more and more; and the axle-bars, dampened and clogged with slush and water, call piercingly for the oil-pot which swings beneath your seat. Then your progress becomes slower and slower until you reach the much cursed six-li speed — that groaning two miles an hour, slower than which no self-respecting mules will move forward. The leaders — there are two — after a time take to "looking," as the carter drolly calls it, which is truly a detestable vice for all self-respecting mules. They edge off the safe way, which, every fool in the cart-country knows, lies right through the deepest water where there is no tilt, and, by climbing round the concave shores of each lakelet in vain efforts to escape the water, leave the near trace dragging in the mud, which makes the wheeler snort with impotent rage, whilst the off-cords jerk so tight across his throat that there is disaster written in the air. Then the carter raises his voice and, no longer muttering, shouts with brazen lungs, "What are you looking at, you dog's droppings!" and, slinging out his lash, searches cunningly for the trace-galls on the leaders' flanks. For a moment the mules hesitate; then sullenly resigning themselves, with a heavy splashing they work through the deep water, all ears and intelligence, though legs slily simulate

tripping, so that even carters may remember that mules are human beings and that such travelling is not fit.

So we had delayed and delayed to give the water an opportunity to run off, as it does with lightning rapidity from the loamy soil; and now the last hour had come since it was past two, and even now a stage, which is fifty li, could not be easily made before dark.

At last we were off, and with much shouting headed through the thriving city of Hsu-chou towards the East gates. But before we had gone far there was the inevitable stop in the worst place — eighteen inches of mud and water and the mules only held in place by shouts from the carters. When you begin your road travels you must possess yourself of a great store of copper cash; for even with the railway so near at hand silver dollars are as yet hardly known in the interior, and the Chinaman, although he loves the feel of the Mexican coin, cannot say whether it is good business exchanging his heavy cash for minted silver when the latter is so little used. Not without much heavy cursing is this business brought to an end. Carters and money-shop people, disdaining all finessing since there was no time to be lost in preliminary courtesies, swore roundly at one another; but even with this, it was many minutes before silver dollars were exchanged for heavy strings of cash, and our journey could be resumed. And it was with a clear sense of lost face, for even the crowd around us knew that we had lost

THE START.

CROSSING A "SANDY RIVER."

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two cash in every hundred because there was a hasty foreigner who would not bargain according to the established custom.

Thus, with pleasant repartee being shouted back by our men, we threaded our way through the city, and at last came to the gates where the pools are most treacherous, and where the broken flags of stone, dating from happier days, offer obstructions of a terrible character. We were not to escape so easily, however, for just as we all were breathing again, a native clerk in the long blue coat of the counting-house stepped up to the mules of the second team and held them up with his black fan. The second carter was off his shafts in a trice and busily rolling up his pig-tail and tightening his girdle. He knew what was coming. The man with the long blue coat cynically watched these bellicose preparations — the first finessing in a land of bluff — and then, flicking open his greasy black fan, began very slowly and very irritatingly to cool himself.

"So you leave by the East gate at an hour which is not the general hour in order to escape," he began. "I, however, require payment in clean cash before you proceed."

Then the fan which had stopped for a few moments commenced to wave again, and the carter blustered and yelled in the agony of having to pay. But he was young and clumsy; and the passers-by, arrested in their strollings by the prospect of an eloquent scene, contemptuously noted that the

points were always missed and that it was not worth waiting for. "Pay," shouted my first carter angrily; "pay," re-echoed the contemptuous onlookers; "pay," said my humble self, whose business it was not to interfere; and the carter, duly convinced of his youth and his clumsiness, paid. It is always in this manner that you leave a native city when you patronise the old methods of travel — with the last domestic details settled in the open so that everyone may bear witness.

In the open country the rain which is so terrible for the roads had anointed the high-standing *kao-liang* with glistening drops until the air was laden with the fat smell of rich crops. The bountiful soil of Honan province signalled out by the scientist-traveller, Richthofen, as the most wonderful he had ever seen, was covered with crops more abundant and luxurious than even those of Central Manchuria. To find *kao-liang* ten feet high is nothing — you will see that even in dusty, dry Chihli province. But *kao-liang* twelve and fourteen feet high, with great fat heads of grain so swollen that they almost fall to the ground, is wonderful. As we progressed farther and farther afield through these glistening giant crops stretching mightily in every direction, the world became shut in, and we were but insignificant mortals struggling through the mud and slush with our carts and mule-teams hidden from everything by the dense mass of foliage about us. The year 1904 has been a good year, and even discontented farmers say that the autumn crops will be wonderful and

that the harvest will be a "ten-tenths," which is the hundred per cent. of Chinese dreams.

Occasionally we passed other carts coming down to the railway, but these were few and far between, for the summer and the rainy season clear most of the traffic from the roads, and all but a few travellers wait for the better times. The rains being at last left behind, the sun, rising refreshed and re-invigorated after two days' absence, beat down on us once more with devastating heat. It was bad for the roads too, and when you are on the road it is the roads and the roads alone which engage your attention — for the water and slush are rapidly dried up by the sun, and are succeeded by a caking slime through which the iron-studded wheels of massive carts tear with increasing difficulty.

The country sweeping away in the distance was becoming more and more open; for the road now occasionally curled over a baby elevation, and these ups and downs drained the water from the highway excepting in a few hollows. Honan and its special characteristics were now clear to the eye. Walled villages, embowered in great clumps of ancient trees, dotted the country far and wide, and stood out in the green *kao-liang*-clad fields like so many islands. What countless villages there are here! Every mile or two along the road you come across one; first the outpost trees and the bare plots of common threshing-ground; then a broken and dilapidated high mud wall, with perhaps a mock cannon or two painted on the black boards which

remain in some places on the top of the fast-crumbling battlements. Then street upon street of mud-walled compounds which surround damaged and weather-beaten houses of indifferent appearance, with children in a state of nature lurking in the doorways who rush away panic-stricken at the sight of the white man. But the villages dotted so thickly on the face of the land are curiously quiet in this shut-in and ancient province of Honan. If you are familiar with things Chinese you expect the pariah dogs to rush out fiercely barking as the clatter of your cart grows louder and louder — to see the naked children crowd forward calling shrilly to the women to come, making each doorway the frame for a dozen curious faces. But you are disappointed, and though perhaps you are relieved you are conscious of a strange feeling. Some dogs do rush forward and then cowardly slink away — it would not be China if they did not do that. The naked babies tumble over one another, and a stray figure or two may lurk at the doorways; but it is all very *thin*. It is, in fact, what the walled protection surrounding the villages has become, a make-believe, a mask and nothing else. Is it because you are crossing a province which, rich beyond belief, has seen too much history made, and has suffered too much, not to show the imprint of the past? But forty or fifty years ago the Taipings on their northward march crossed Honan, and when you have said that you have said everything — for where the Taipings went, it was ruination to men

and beasts. Then Honan has been for many centuries a brigand province; the mud walls surrounding each village were built because of that, and the brigands must have bled the country so fiercely that there was nothing much but the rich soil left. And the province being the buffer between Northern and Central China has also been a common battleground, and too many hordes have passed across it. Thus to-day the villages are very quiet and the road traffic, which is a rich business, is all in the hands of foreign Chinese, the Shantung province men, who go everywhere; whilst the banking and selling of merchandise belong to the provinces of Shansi and Shensi. The people of the province merely till night and day, and are chained to the soil.

And this population is docile and curious to a degree. At noon, maybe, you stop and unyoke for an hour or two. The inn stable-hands step forward, very ostentatiously, so that their services may be remembered later on, and furnishing themselves with great iron trowels, scrape the mud from your massive wheels, slapping it ungraciously to the ground; then tilt the carts alternately on to their off and near sides, and pour oil on to the axle-bars, and spin and spin until the air buzzes and you may know that you are being properly served. The mules have their noses already luxuriously deep in their fodder-baskets, and stamp and whisk at the flies with their thin tails, and munch and blow the air through their nostrils to show that they are tired but content.

The carters, their first cares seen to, have seated themselves at an outdoor table in the inn yard, and from a great copper tea-pot pour out for themselves big bowls of steaming tea, on which they also blow and gurgle down, rubbing their naked legs and pawing at their ribs after the manner of primitive man who loves to scratch. Your own travel food is soon inside you — it is not good to eat too much when you voyage in a bumping cart — and then the docile population of Honan, shouted away with mock warnings by the *chang-kuei-ti*, or master of the till, only to shuffle back a few steps and then trickle forward a good many more, attracts your attention. They are just docile and listless, and that is all, and there are far too few of them for the size of the villages, if you judge size by the extent of the ancient mud walls and the great barren spaces you see on every side where houses must once have stood. They are also, incidentally as it were, munching water-melons, everybody eating a piece. The men have fat slices so big that two hands have to be brought into play, and the most convenient manner becomes squatting on the haunches, so that the knees may lend a purchase; the women have smaller slices, because they are women; and a woman since she does not *mai li-ch'i* — sell strength, which means heavy manual labour — needs not so much food; the children and the babies have little bits, mostly rind, because they are small, and sucking melons is a pastime for the large. There they therefore stand, the thin population of Honan, docile

and somewhat curious, munching their everlasting water-melon because it is the height of summer, and the cholera-season is at hand, but munching also because water-melon is very cheap and very filling; and when you have filled yourself until you can eat no more you save on your hard food which can be sold — all of which is good economy, but bad for the population at large. This thin population chained to the soil, and these century-old villages, are fruitful problems, because there is no startling development possible in China so long as the old conditions continue over such vast stretches of the country.

The women's clothes here in old Honan are very loose and full — have in fact a Chinese Ming Dynasty fulness, and none of the Manchu Ch'ing tightness which is now the rightful fashion. The head-dress and the old silver ornaments — when savings permit of silver ornaments — are copied from very old designs, and gazing at them you know that the march of centuries has been very little heeded here. Only the railway coming so near has taught them that there are other things in the world than the few they have known of here for twenty centuries; and now it has become the custom for these simple people on feast-days and holidays to set out in their bullock carts long before cock crows and travel dozens of miles to see the wonderful new thing. And these bullock carts — even they are different in design from those seen elsewhere. They are older and more primitive in design, just such square, heavy carts as must have been used in Babylonia.

The carters finish their tea-drinking, and hastily swallow a bowl of small millet — no self-respecting man fills himself with food in the middle of the day; the mules are driven into their hauling collars — the wrangle with the inn-keeper begins, and it is not ended until you are half a mile down the road. Then once more the great millet and the ever recurring villages slide slowly past hour after hour in the hot afternoon sun, and bumping and slushing you progress slowly but surely forward. By seven, or at latest eight in the evening, you have done your hundred to one hundred and twenty li, which means from thirty to forty miles; and again you drive clattering through other inn gates.

In the bigger inns, which are in the main villages where a night halt has to be made, there is still some show of prosperity, and you will see the walls of the guest rooms covered with writing, which varies from the most correct of despatch hands to an undecipherable *ts'ao tzu* or grass character, the product of the careless. These are the texts and sayings which generations of travellers have perpetuated on grimy walls to while away time and banish care as they halted for the night. Some are witty, many are sad, and many are obscene; but nearly all make pointed reference to the accommodation which is offered. Writes one man: "The terrors of civil war are great, but the recurring discomforts of the road are worse." Some exclaim at the sadness of the heart when far from home and kith and kin; others carry the war into the enemy's country and

An Old Honan Village.

[*Face page* 136, *Vol. I.*

In a Roadside Inn.

coarsely curse fleas and other crawling and jumping animals. One written in the hand of the student read something like this: —

Little flea,
you come to me,
me, the unfortunate traveller;
you savage mite,
you would me bite,
me, the luckless traveller.

Verse after verse of such sayings adorned the walls; and each new person coming from afar and reading these efforts had attempted to cap the last text he spied with one better. Most of such things are from the pens of young Chinese students travelling up to the provincial capital, Kaifengfu, for their examinations, for the ordinary man is too illiterate to find pleasure in such pastimes, and it is only the literate who know that in the days of Yao and Shun, the golden age of some four thousand years ago, there were no fleas.

Meanwhile it is baking hot, and even the texts of ribald scholars, deciphered with difficulty, cease to attract one. The rains, left forty-eight hours behind, have scarcely touched the roads here; and as one approaches Kaifengfu and the Yellow River, the dryness of the heat becomes more and more appalling. Already the day before the mercury on a light travelling thermometer had crept up to 105 degrees in the doubtful shade of the blue cart cover, and at seven that evening the sun had set blood-red and congested — a sure sign that he would rise again in ten hours more angry and insistent than ever.

Even the carters were getting anxious, for the mules, capable of any exertion in a temperate atmosphere, were dallying over their food — a fatal sign for any Chinese living thing, since food is the first consideration of most of the hundreds of millions here congregated. At the noon-halt, the first carter had cursed and even coaxed the wheeler of the baggage cart. "Dog's dropping of a mule," he had sworn, "can you not see it is good food such as a man might eat?" — lovingly digging holes into it with his own fingers. The mule thus apostrophised had merely continued to nose its basket, and finally had blown an immense sigh of disgust through its distended nostrils. "Oh," had groaned the carter, "it is no use, she tells me she has fire, how indeed can she eat?" Then he had gently mixed her fresh food, very wet, with all the coarse *kao-liang* straw thrown out; but although this kind attention had been rewarded by the mule gingerly licking up the water-soaked bran to cool herself, she would not eat as mules should eat. So the carter had resigned himself to the inevitable and insinuated to the inn-keeper that he might need another mule. "Might," retorted the latter, "everybody in the inn has seen that she has fire for half-an-hour past; there is one mule at two hundred cash a day." The carter fenced, but at 160 he had to accept, and henceforth the mule with fire travelled with hurt dignity tied to the tail of her cart to the provincial capital. You must be careful when a mule has fire or else you will lose her. And behind our cavalcade came

another man — a man from the inn mounted on a derelict pony — who came to see that payment was made and that the mule was returned, for who can say where a carter will arrive if there is no one to watch him? John Chinaman takes no risks. It was for this reason that the carters approached me at nine in the evening and said that we must make a start at two in the morning and rest when the heat was at its worst. So, to prevent untimely deaths, it was decided that we would start before the cocks had crowed, which biblical saying is still in vogue on the old cart roads of China.

Two o'clock came and the carters lumberingly made ready. In fifteen minutes we were off by bright moonlight through the silent and deserted village streets. We reached a dilapidated gateway and called on the village watchman to unbar. "Open the great gates," we chorused discordantly and sleepily, until the watchman, aroused from his slumbers, slouched surlily forward from the guard-house with his rattle under his arm. It is unlawful to leave at night and therefore you must pay; and the sleeping custodian of peace, who in theory watches, pocketing his cash, unbarred and let us out. What a scene beyond!

The walled village, perched on an irregular square of rising ground and embowered in clumps of old trees, stood out a sombre, imposing mass against the lighter background of endless fields. The moon, still high in the heavens, flooded the whole country with a silver light, and in its soft rays everything but

the picturesque was obliterated. The narrow gateways rising many feet above the brown mud walls were not like the massive northern gateways built to keep out barbarian hordes; they looked much older in design, less square and less defiant than those to which one is accustomed. In the quiet night it seemed somehow as if their design had been perhaps treasured up in brains that had travelled from afar many thousands of years before — all the way from Mesopotamia. The faint paint-marks still left on the woodwork had none of the fierce vermilion reds and clear greens loved by all Mongol and Tartar rulers. The colours, renovated at rare intervals, were calmer and more peaceful, and the blue — a peculiar blue — is like what the very old Chinese must have used. These may be but fancies which come to the half-sleeping brain; but remembering the curious century-old carts with their wheels of solid wood, the women's ornaments and other things, it is more than probable that in Honan to this day traces of very long ago may still be found.

Thus bumping along over interminable roads, night passed into day. Once more the heat beat down and once more we panted and sweated. At eleven in the morning we stopped, only forty-five li from the provincial capital, having covered thirty-five miles since our night start. The mules, however, were trembling violently with their ears laid far back — sure signs of a great exhaustion. The carters, muttering to themselves that this was

no way to travel, threw water over the beasts' legs, set the stable hands to rubbing them all over with damp steaming cloths, whilst they themselves further sprayed mouthful after mouthful of cold water over the animals' nostrils by blowing violently with their cheeks puffed out. And after ten minutes of this treatment the mules appeared to be recovering. But would they eat? The baskets were dumped in front of them with plenty of grain and bran on top of the coarse straw, and then — they ate! The carters chortled and the she-mule with fire began whinnying after the curious mule fashion, to show that she, too, could eat now. Ugh, it was all right; we could sleep and yet reach the capital before nightfall.

At three o'clock we started again refreshed but dripping with perspiration. The sun, still high in the heavens, was rapidly losing its sting. At eleven o'clock it had been 108 degrees. Now with a faint breeze stirring the air it was not more than 100. Above blood-heat each degree is recorded by your watchful system as accurately as on a thermometer, and for each degree that the mercury falls you are inclined to pray a fervent prayer.

Around us as we half cantered forward it was still everlasting *kao-liang* with an occasional patch of barley or wheat; but the soil, so amazingly rich a few dozen miles behind, was fast becoming less generous. The Yellow River and its distressing sands were modifying the country, and you felt it becoming drier and drier each step the mules took

forward. At half-past four we passed a village with great banks of sand piled thirty feet high against its inner walls — the deadly mark left by the river in some bygone time when it had broken its banks and carried death and destruction far and wide. Shallow and sandy streams had been crossed by us all day long. Now it was getting too dry even for such little waterways, and we plodded along over roadways with ever deepening sand-tracks left behind us. At six o'clock we caught a glimpse of a high pagoda as we curved over a piece of rising ground. "P'ien-liang," cried the carter, pointing with his whip to the tower and using the colloquial term for Kaifengfu. It was true. I could trace the city walls spreading out mile after mile along the plain, and capped at regular intervals by their high-standing towers. It was Kaifengfu at last after four days of exhausting travel.

We urged the tired mules on with shouts, feigning the whip-crack after the Chinese fashion with the tongue, and we finally reached the outlying suburbs which always straggle far beyond city walls. Outside the gates was a great open space, and to the left of the roadway a tall modern smoke-stack towered above a long line of new brick buildings. Gay bugle calls smote our ears, the new-fangled foreigner's bugle. Soldiers began to appear, lounging about in dozens in their new uniforms; tall well-built fellows, openly inquisitive in place of the former pre-Boxer surliness. More trumpet calls and bugle calls; the gates of the brick buildings

which boasted of a modern smoke-stack were flung open and mechanics streamed out. It is a modern arsenal; the troops are modern foreign-drilled troops, and here in the middle of Honan after more than a hundred miles of waving *kao-liang*, walled and half-deserted villages reposing in the bliss of ignorance, and a population engaged in finding enough food for its belly, is a city which after the manner of Chinese cities sucks the strength from the country, and is now engaged in attempting to make up for lost time by adopting some things belonging to the West. It is worthy of investigation.

CHAPTER VI

KAIFENGFU, ACROSS THE YELLOW RIVER AND ON TO PEKING

Our carts clattered forward, the people stared, we passed the gates. "Aho!" called the city-guards, rushing up hurriedly, "a Western guest; stop, stupid carters!" For the carters it was a peremptory order; for myself an intimation that so-called Western guests are under close scrutiny; so we duly stopped. The sergeant of the city guard hurried up to me, and with a deep bow, "Pardon me, your Excellency, our own Excellency, the Viceroy (this was a polite lie, for he is but a provincial Governor), expressly handing to our care foreign gentlemen, requests that you will give a card so that official quarters may be prepared." I smiled and understood. This was the reflex action of those numerous sententious Imperial edicts issued since the great tribulation of 1900, calling on Viceroys, Governors, and all provincial officials to remember their manners towards the white man and "to protect." I was being protected.

A Chinese official card was dug out of a twelve-

inch Moukden card-case. "This for the Viceroy, Excellency," said the attentive sergeant, holding out his hand for more. Another was dealt to him. "This for the provincial Treasurer; there are yet the Judge, the city Governor, the Chief of Police, and the Records to be remembered." I handed him despairingly half-a-dozen — luckily cards are cheap in China, for the red paper of which they are made is thin, and you may have a thousand for the same price as a hundred in the West. Then we clattered on, only to be halted once more to know what our city address would be. "City address! ask at the inns," I replied.

On we drove down street after street with the city crowds, which never lack in China, staring us out of countenance. Half-an-hour passed and I became angry. "Where are you taking us to?" I asked of the carters. "To the inns, to the inns; do you not know that the city walls are thirty-eight li long, and that this is no village?" So on we drove until the streets finally narrowed down, and the mud left by the rains changed from brown to dark brown, and from dark brown to the indescribable Chinese city black, distinguished amongst all the muds of the earth for its devastating and indescribable stench. Yes, this was the inner city, and since China is a century or two behind the rest of the world, the inns still cluster around the Government offices, so that men seeking preferment have but a step to go from where they lodge to the back doors of the office-holders. Alas! I had arrived in the very

season when such gentry are thickly gathered, for at each door there was the same cry — not a room, not a bed. At last, arriving at one place of imposing appearance (after the wretched inns on the country roads), I peremptorily demanded the best rooms, or else I would really invoke the help of the Governor. Fluent vernacular and this invoking of the higher authorities proved miraculous; I was offered accommodation fit for servants. Protesting, I was met with the glib statement that a great man travelling to Peking had engaged all the best. "Show me the great man," I exclaimed, determined to be properly treated. My angry voice had, however, brought him forth without any calling, and soon I was assuring an independent Prefect of Southern Honan that I would gladly take half his accommodation. The Prefect, being a Chinese gentleman, bowed and accepted me, and at last after this wearying delay I could rest in peace.

Kaifengfu is a city of more than mediocre importance. Placed strategically but a few miles from the banks of the Yellow River, with a triple dyke system of mighty earth-works protecting it from the dread water attacks, it has often been a city of refuge for the Emperors of China. Once from A.D. 960 to 1129 it was the capital of China. Then northern China, the real North which only begins across the Yellow River, was overrun by marauding Kin and Kitan Tartars, and Chinese dynasties, which succeeded one another with some rapidity, sought refuge by placing the broad and swift-flowing river, called

"China's sorrow," between them and their enemies. Since those far-off days it has sunk in importance, but the vast extent of its walls, its still existing Imperial Palaces, and the pride of its scholars, are still fruitful themes in the provinces. During the 'fifties, the Taipings on their march to Peking came across Kaifengfu, and finding the city obdurate and disinclined to open its gates to long-haired rebels, made an attempt to carry it by direct assault. The attack was repulsed with heavy loss. Then the cruel rebel leaders turned their eyes and thought of the treacherous Yellow River. "Let us cut the dykes and flood them out like rats," they said. The dykes were duly cut and the city half swamped. Then it capitulated, and the vast mounds and desolate wastes of sand which still surround its walls for many miles testify eloquently to the ravage committed half a century ago.

Not many miles below the city you may see another interesting sight. It was at this point that the Yellow River a few decades ago changed its channel, so that instead of flowing into the sea through the province of Kiangsu, it swung north, and emptied itself into the shallow Gulf of Pechili, many hundreds of miles away from its former mouth. Had Kaifengfu been but a score or two miles lower down it would then have been blotted out of existence like so many thousands of villages and towns in that terrible year.

In the morning I was early afoot sight-seeing and official-calling. Here, issuing from the doors of the

"Inn of Bounteous Prosperity," everything is close at hand; and a few steps brought me to the vast courtyards of the Provincial Governor, the Provincial Treasurer, and other important magnates. But more interesting than these things were the streets, not on account of their shops, their crowds or their curiosities, but on account of their armed guards. In the old days of but four years ago, you might wander to your heart's content over all the length and breadth of China and, excepting in the camps, never see an armed red-coat. Now how different! Here in Kaifengfu gay bugling had involuntarily heralded my entry into the city; guards and soldiers had lounged in great numbers at the gates; and now, in the inner city, a rifle-armed sentry stood at every street corner. Nor were these soldiers or the arms they carried of the old make-believe *régime*. Each man was a tall well-built fellow, clad in a good new tunic and a dark blue turban, with ammunition pouches and a bayonet at his side, and a very modern Mauser rifle on his shoulder. Each man also stood for that new and little-understood thing, Re-armed China, and each carried the lesson of the Boxer year on his shoulder — that a rifle to be useful must be kept spotless and perfectly sound, and must be provided with plenty of suitable ammunition. Half a dozen times I stopped in front of these saluting street sentries, and after some mild banter examined rifles, bayonets, and ammunition pouches. Everything was spotless and in first-rate order, and each man had twenty clips of Mauser

ammunition ready at his belt. The old Chinese levies used to have their names clumsily written on a large piece of red paper, which was elegantly pasted across the butt end of the rifle — a rifle which also used to carry a few assorted odds and ends, such as pipe-lighting spills of paper, a tobacco-pouch, and many other things strung on it. I had even come across a small party of these archaic soldiery engaged in brigand hunting at the last railway station I had left. In Kaifengfu, however, there was none of that. Each man's rifle was numbered in the proper fashion, and the admirable manner in which these men brought their weapons up to the present, with the whole body responding and every muscle hard-strung, would have been a revelation to European soldiers accustomed to the old-time ragamuffins who once did duty as soldiers in this Celestial Empire.

I passed into some of the Yamens and our conversation turned on soldiers and wars. Already Kaifengfu possesses eight battalions or four thousand men of these well-armed and well-drilled men; the arsenal I had seen outside the city was not yet in proper working condition, but soon it would be, and then, although many parts would have to come from the Wuchang or Kiangnan main arsenals, rifles could be turned out here and all minor repairs rapidly effected. "We have water power too," said one of my official friends; "the Yellow River is there, and is, as you will presently see, a terribly swift-flowing stream. Already a Japanese contractor

has been here wishing to put up electric plant for us. It is not yet quite decided, but it is probable that we shall agree." What changes are indeed taking place in China and how the cities are pushing far ahead of the country districts. In a few years there will be mighty and far-reaching developments, although the changes, as long as the rural districts are held back, will be lop-sided ones.

But if you love the old and the quaint you may still find many interesting things in Kaifengfu. There is here the last remains of one of the most curious and unexplained things in the world, a colony of Chinese Jews planted in the middle of a vast Empire and possessing no history to explain how they got there. Their existence has long been known in China, for even Marco Polo, that gossiping traveller, mentions them in the thirteenth century. Then they must have been a powerful colony, for in the fourteenth century they were invited by the Mongol Emperors of China to send men and money to aid the Imperial Standards. For the last three centuries, however, all these Chinese Jews have lived in Kaifengfu and no trace of others has been found in any other part of the Empire. The only thing they themselves claim to know is that they entered China "through the North-Western route during the Han Dynasty, which was two thousand years ago."

It was not until the year 1700 that these curious persons were first seen by a white man. Then a Jesuit Father, Père Gozani, visited Kaifengfu and

On the Banks of the Yellow River.

On the Road.

[*Face page* 150, *Vol. I.*

wrote the earliest existing description of the colony. The synagogue, called the Ch'ing-chee Ssu, "the pure and true temple," was then a large establishment consisting of four separate courts and various buildings enclosed for residence, worship, and work. The synagogue itself measured sixty feet in length and forty in breadth, and was embellished by a double row of stone columns standing before it. In the centre of the building was the throne of Moses, a magnificent and elevated chair with an embroidered seat, on which was placed the Book of the Law when it was read. But this was in the days of two centuries ago. Stirred by these accounts, in 1851 an English Bishop in China, Bishop Smith, sent two native Christians from Shanghai to learn the condition of these Chinese Jews; but the messengers after a prolonged absence returned with the report that the Jews were penniless, that their synagogue had been practically destroyed, and that they had only succeeded in copying some portions of the Old Testament which they found there written on a vellum of great age. Finally in 1866 Dr. Martin, an American missionary, set out from Peking determined to investigate the whole matter most thoroughly and to see what really remained. Of the former synagogue he found that only one solitary stone remained, but on this stone he was able to decipher an inscription commemorating the erection of the synagogue in A.D. 1183 and its re-building in 1488. He also learnt that the colony, sunk in the deepest poverty and having lost all knowledge of their

sacred tongue, the traditions, and the ritual worship, had sold the ruins of their temple for building materials, and that of the ancient faith nothing remained. It was this knowledge which urged the Jewish Association of Shanghai a few years ago to attempt a rescue. Members of the Jewish community in London were interested in the undertaking, and a mission sent to Kaifengfu, which brought back six Chinese Jews. These are now being instructed, and it is hoped that this ancient community which has travelled so far and whose history is a mystery may regain something of its lost position. But this hope seems too optimistic.

It was with this story in my head that I set out with a Mohammedan from the inn to see what there was to be seen. We arrived in the Mohammedan quarter, which practically surrounds the some-time Jewish quarter, but there was little to learn. My Chinese Mohammedan was merely amused, knowing nothing of history excepting the history of cash, and told me that the only thing he knew was that the people I sought were formerly called *lan-mao hui-tzu*, or blue-capped Mohammedans, but that now they and the ordinary Chinese Moslems were "one people." It was only after a lot of trouble that an old woman was discovered whose appearance promised well. Her nose was hooked and her manners expansive; but alas! when I used three entirely different Chinese expressions for Jew, she understood none of them. "But still you are not a Mohammedan," I argued.

"No, I am not, it is true, but I am not what you say I am." Presently she went indoors and fetched out a small boy with a nose which no Chinaman could possess were he of the pure race. "What is he?" she asked. The shape of the head was not that of the Chinaman, the lips were thick, the nose curved and the pig-tail looked odd enough. "He is a Jew," I answered. The old woman chuckled. "This is a true Mohammedan who eats no pork." It is evidently an undeniable fact; the Chinese Mohammedans and the few remaining Jews in Kaifengfu resemble each other so closely that it is impossible to distinguish them. They live all together and for years have so intermarried that it is doubtful whether any pure-blooded Chinese Jews now remain. And from subsequent investigation it was clear that the practice of circumcision had fallen into desuetude. With no synagogue, no books, and no circumcision, it will require a good deal of effort to restore this curious lost tribe to its former position, and there can therefore be but scant hope of a separate Chinese Jewish community ever existing again.

In Kaifengfu there are many other sights to be seen. The Imperial Palaces, which have been completely restored recently, are quite interesting in a way. In 1901 the Empress Dowager and the Emperor, on their way back to Peking after their terrified flight to distant Hsianfu, stopped here for several weeks while making up their minds whether it was really safe to venture back into the Peking lions' den. They finally moved on, and since then

these palaces, insignificant after the grandiose enclosures and vast buildings of the Forbidden City, but still distinguished, have been vigorously kept up. But once you have passed through the T'ai Hou-men into the T'ai Hou-tien and the Beyond in great Peking, where the innumerable Imperial concubines and the sexless eunuchs live, there is nothing to describe in such a place as this.

Here in Kaifengfu, the vague rumours of heavy fighting in Manchuria, which had been in the air for many days since the Yangtsze had been left behind, crystallised into facts. At the provincial Governor's Yamen copies of Reuter's telegrams re-transmitted by the Imperial Chinese Telegraphs were daily received. It is a sign of the times that in such an unknown place as Kaifengfu you may learn almost as quickly to-day the news of the outer world as you could in an European city. And this news, really only for official ears, is known at the inns very few minutes after its arrival in the city, so that gentry from the country districts who have come up to the capital on special business, talk of Kuroki's successes in a way which would have been impossible five years ago. Everywhere there are signs that a new China is being born.

But it was time to prepare for the forward march. Ahead was the formidable Yellow River whose pleasure has to be consulted in these summer-flood times; and as the water was sinking there was not a minute to be lost In the morning we arose early,

my official friend travelling to Peking suddenly making up his mind not to dally any longer but to move on with me. So my carts and his filled the courtyards, and now to the general *mise en scène* was added the picturesqueness of his outriders, his *t'ing-ch'ai*, his lantern-bearers for night travel, and his body servants, who soon all raised a vast din. By 5.30 I was ready; at six and even 6.30 the official callers were still pouring in making their adieux to the departing Prefect (who was a rich man), and were whispering a few last messages for Peking ears into his own no less worthy ones. For you see transmission by written despatch is only reserved for such official business as may see the light of day. Those little things concerning the apportioning of all-important silver sycee are too precious and too delicate to be trusted to tell-tale parchment. Big men such as Viceroys, Governors, Provincial Treasurers, Generals and High Commissioners have their own private agents in Peking to whom speed at regular intervals other trusted retainers, with a few words, and perhaps a slip of thin rice paper adorned with a few mystic characters slipped through the thick jade ring they wear on the thumb. In the hands of such men is placed the management of affairs concerning the periodic payment of small sums of money to everybody who counts in the Peking scheme of things. But small officials, whose incomes (squeeze and all included) are only in four figures of tael weights, can afford no such luxuries as special agents, and therefore friends travelling to

the great capital, having been duly feasted and propitiated, whisper the necessary words and explain as best they can the ever diminishing resources of this and that man's domain. It is a curious system which has grown up with the passage of ages and which everyone is powerless and unwilling to stop.

For this reason it was some time before we got off, slopping through the black mud of the city streets and gaining the open beyond the walls. Outside, the sand dunes rose and fell away in every direction; and the cart wheels sank axle-deep into the sand and loam. The mules, at first hustled along with the eternal calls and shouts of the road and the heavy cracking of whips, soon began to amble forward easily of their own accord with their hauling collars clinging tightly about their necks — they smelt and felt the water, and having done the journey many times welcomed the change which the river-banks would bring them. It is known to you, being an intelligent traveller, that the Yellow River is dyked and dammed in many ways and has been so since the beginning of time; but in spite of this you pass the first line of embankments, five miles from the river, almost without noticing them. Then as you look back you see that the cart road has climbed a great height, and that it has slid through the top of a dyke, which rises high above the level of the country, by means of a narrow open cut. This makes you watchful, but this is only dyke number one, many miles from the water. Between this one and the next one there are the same miles of fields

of waving *kao-liang* covering the ground ten feet high — a silent testimony to the fact that the Chinaman would cultivate the very face of the waters could he but devise a means of making floating gardens pay.

Two miles farther on you come to the second dyke, reed-grown and grass-grown so as to bind it together with the utmost strength. The summit of this one is fifty feet high in the air. Still from the top of this there is nothing to be seen except the sun's rays glittering on the sandy roadways with perhaps a faint sparkle far away. Then after another half-hour you climb a third embankment which is higher still, and there, only a mile off, is the river with dead-level banks of exactly the same colour as the water. The mules whinny and canter forward, because now the sun has become baking hot, and swiftly flowing water means a little coolness and perhaps a faint breeze. Ahead of you, clinging to the river-edge, is a group of ramshackle reed-built tea-inns and a few rough mule stables; on the river itself are a dozen very square and immensely heavily built junks with great masts rising stiffly above them. It is the point of embarkation for the combined armies now moving down in a long line of carts. We canter in, the mules are unyoked, and in five minutes carts and beasts are aboard. I am the official guest of my official friend, and an official junk flying a red emblazoned flag awaits our pleasure. Let it wait whilst we cool ourselves with boiling tea!

Presently everything and everyone is on board, excepting ourselves, a mass of mules, carts, outriders, ponies, and attendants huddling together, and it is time, according to the unwritten rule, to go. But before starting a ceremony has to be performed. The headman of the little village approaches the Prefect and tells him that all is ready; his servants carefully help on his official clothes and his official hat, and he walks stiffly down to the water's edge. A rough straw mat is spread on the ground; a few incense sticks are spluttering in a bowl; and as the Prefect takes his stand in front of them, a sharp roll of fire-crackers attracts the slumbering attention of the river-gods. The Prefect seizes the burning incense sticks, falls on his knees, and bows deeply three times with his hands above his head. In two seconds it is all over; the mat and the official clothes have been removed; and an unofficial pig is noisily nosing the ground where the ceremony took place, filled with a wild hope of picking up a few grains of sacrificial rice. It is a simple and curious ceremony this propitiating of the spirits, which may arise and devour you if you are not careful; and it was interesting watching the crowd of peasantry surrounding the territorial official as he performed the ordered rites. For it was to protect them, the agriculturists living along the river-banks, that this ceremony must be performed, and curious to see what the answer would be, I asked one of these men why it was done.

"Why? because it has always been done, and the officials are the protectors of the common people;

On the Upper Yangtsze.

[*Face page 158, Vol. I.*

Crossing the Yellow River.

and if they do not care for the river the river will not care for us." Is there any use in disturbing this belief, since one belief is as good as another?

The junk now swung off with a stout bamboo hawser holding her nose to the current, whilst the junkmen were busy with anchors and hauling tackle. This crossing of the Yellow River is curious and little known. The river, so sluggish-looking from the banks, was already tugging at us frantically, and as the bamboo hawser was paid out, the village, for no apparent reason, suddenly slipped a hundred yards ahead of us. It was a hint of what the current could be. Even so close in shore it was running six knots; far out in the middle it was swirling away in treacherous eddies at ten miles an hour. Suddenly the crew who had been poling steadily stopped stamping along the poling-boards. The headman gave a shout, and a heavy anchor was thrown overboard with a great splash. Instantly another brigade of men started, with hoarse yells, hauling in by means of a complicated tackle-system rigged to the mainmast. The end of the bamboo hawser now splashed overboard, and two hundred yards away we saw the fast-disappearing villagers tugging, tugging, tugging. . . . We were now solely dependent on our own resources; how could this anchor-hauling get us over?

The steersman answered the question by putting the junk sharply over so that her bows now headed the stream only three-quarters on, pushing us away to the opposite bank, whilst with renewed energy

and re-inforced by dozens of hands, our anchor, dragging along the shallow river bottom but always gripping sufficiently to give the boat a purchase, slid us out into the middle of the stream. It was the application of principles which I did not at first understand. Then when the anchor was hauled alongside, brawny arms lifted it up and carried it to the bows half in the water, and once more let it splash. Each time this anchor-carrying operation took place we lost tremendously, and I was beginning to think we would be carried down-stream too far when the look-out, who was perched on the bows and armed with a long pole, sang out, "Four feet of water and the great sand-bank." Instantly the anchor-hauling ceased and the crew, abandoning their scanty trouserings, to my immense surprise jumped overboard. A curious ferrying experience this. Presently light anchors and chains had been carried far ahead of us by the men in the water, and the steersman, sweeping round a long yuloh, put our head up a couple of points, so as to stem the current more directly. In three-quarters of an hour by much industrious hauling we recovered nearly half the distance we had lost in a quarter of an hour by availing ourselves of this sheltering sand-bank; and then with a thousand yards still between us and the other shore the men came aboard and commenced their mast-hauling operations. But these last thousand yards cost us dearly, we were carried four miles down-stream.

At last we bumped and looked at our watches;

three hours and a half, everybody said it was admirable time. But all was not yet over, for we had to be slowly tracked with a stamp, stamp, stamp of hundreds of feet to the river station. Across the river a tiny roughness on the bank showed us the village we had left in the early morning. In this manner is the Yellow River crossed — a river generally a mile and a half wide, but sometimes even ten or twenty in flood times, when all traffic ceases. With many barriers of this kind everywhere in China, either great rivers or savage mountains, it is no wonder that the country has been held back and that the people are divided in the curious fashion which the native methods of travel bring to light.

We reached the river-station and perspiringly sought shelter in one of the rough reed tea-houses. The heat was intense and the shafts of the sun more than could be borne in the open. Under the reeds the thermometer marked 110 degrees.

Beneath the decks of our junk, it now transpired, were dozens of unfortunate cows and calves. These being cheap on the south side of the river are dear on the northern bank; and therefore certain drovers, entering into private arrangements with my mandarin's servants, had brought them over for nothing. Now it was found that several calves were dead from the heat and a terrible dispute was raging as to who should pay. My official friend rose to the occasion, and with a Solomon-like justice decreed that his men should pay half to punish

them for their deceit, and the drovers the other half for enticing public servants to do what they should not do; and it was with this last scene before me that I made my adieux and hastened forward to the railway. My Prefect was going by water and by cart straight on to Peking in the old fashion. For me the pleasures of the road were becoming irksome.

With the river left behind us and its reed-grown embankments fading away, the cracked soil and the thin *kao-liang* crops proclaimed that a different belt of country had been entered. Across the Yellow River the real North China begins, with its bronzed people tanned by the dry heat and the crackling winds, and its dusty fields oppressed by climatic changes which are too sudden. South of the Yellow River is one of the richest belts in China, but once in Chihli there is no such agricultural prosperity.

Four miles farther on we came on the old Imperial highway, an Imperial highway in all truth since it was renovated only four years ago when the fugitive Peking Court returned to its home by this route and provincial officials were forced then to spend a little money to keep up appearances. Need I say that the road is now worse than ever? Spreading out in the distance, the great snake-like cart-ruts could be seen curling away mile after mile, cutting up a roadway which was sixty or seventy feet wide. At regular intervals along this highway were small white guard-houses with newly engrossed black characters already looking faded. They had served their purpose if they had been

THE FIRST SIGN OF THE REAL NORTH — A CAMEL CARAVAN.

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seen by the Empress Dowager three years ago; to-day what did it matter! Going into one of these guard-houses, which doubtless, according to the old regulations of the Empire, should each have its quota of soldiers guarding people who use the road, I found that the structures were not even of brick. By an ingenious arrangement wood and plaster had been made to do service for the structures which one day must have existed, and which had probably been torn down for the sake of their materials; and the official builders had perpetrated this deceit safe in the knowledge that no one belonging to the Imperial *cortège* would ever look inside. What contradictions there are to-day! Reuter's telegrams, Mauser rifles, arsenals, railways, and many other things being spread in a thin layer over the top of a rotting mass of make-believes.

Presently the air cooled a little, the dry northern breeze faintly fanned one's cheeks and sucked the moisture from one's pores; for it is always thus in the true North separated from the half-North by a mere river. The sun sank and night came on, and we had put twenty-five miles between ourselves and our morning's experiences. It was time to ask about the railway, for the working parties pushing down from the Peking way had been already reported in this district. The railway, however, had not been heard of in the little village we halted at for the night, although at Kaifengfu they had lyingly informed us it was already there. Poor indeed is a Chinaman's idea of time and distance.

We must go another forty miles, due north until we came to the town of Wei-whei. So on we went all the next day, through dry-as-dust villages with an ever cooling air blowing down on us, and the great heat left far behind. By sun-down of the next day we had covered those forty miles, and tired and dust-laden reached the prefectural city of Wei-whei. Across the cart-road rose a railway embankment. We rushed forward and looked, and then even the carters blasphemed. The embankment was no mirage, for there were rails and a splendid rock-bed, but this was no Belgian work. And in any case the Peking iron-way runs north by south; this was west by east and the explanation was clear. We had blundered on to the Peking Syndicate's coal railway, a British company destined some day to run coal all over China, but now possessing but a hundred miles of road.

We clattered through the town of Wei-whei-fu, which is the first of half a dozen rich prefectural cities, which stand along the line of the Peking railway, and we stopped to inquire. The railway? Everyone was talking about the railway; it was somewhere outside the North Gate of the city, perhaps ten li beyond. So on we went. Half-an-hour passed, an hour, an hour and a half, and still no signs of anything. Then two lumbering carts passed laden with foreigners' camp effects. We held them up irately because they were alone. Where was the railway? Half a mile farther we would see the rails.

We drove down another road, narrow and torn by cart traffic, up another, and suddenly there were rails. But it was railhead absolute, for naked embankment rolled away to the south whilst loose rails dumped by a construction train lay in confused masses before us. We chirruped the shying mules along, parallel to the embankment, and another half a mile brought us to another local land-mark — two hundred coolies and masons at work raising the ground and squaring blocks of stone for a future station. But there was no white man, and the coolies seemed curiously dispirited.

Suddenly we saw a European. It was not exactly an encouraging sight from the railway traveller's point of view, but still it was something. An Italian shift-boss in green riding trousers, puttees after the English fashion, a pink shirt and a huge sun helmet, was sitting disconsolately on top of a cask of nails flicking at the flies. It was a manifest sign of railway building and must be accepted as such. I approached, and in the best Tuscan inquired after his welfare. The news was bad. The railway had been ripped up by the heavy rains and everything was done for dozens, perhaps even hundreds, of kilometres. He, the solitary Italian, had been cut off from everybody for two weeks, and now there was no macaroni, no absinthe, no anything left, and no one knew if the railway would ever run again. The Latin race is singularly gloomy when it becomes pessimistic.

The carters, scenting disaster in the air, had

approached and were now mingling the sound of their harmonious voices with those of their betters. The head carter, for reasons unexplained, had developed a huge boil on his off leg two days before, and the sounds of his complaints had made the air unpleasant in his proximity ever since. Only bribery had forced him to continue; his own dictates urged him to return home so that he might die in peace after the Chinese fashion near his ancestors. The Chinese, like the Latins, are unnecessarily pessimistic at times — but Chinese pessimism is of a kind that is a good investment.

Now learning that he must go steadily on for more hundreds of li, the carter raised his mournful voice in protest; and even sarcasm, a weapon which properly used can effect wonders, proved unavailing. At last, equally mournfully, I turned and handed him a dollar, once again defeated, and the sufferer, both ringing and biting the coin to satisfy himself as to my apparent generosity, signified his willingness to go just one day more and then not an inch farther even for the heaviest bribes.

The solitary Italian in the pink shirt offered me hospitality, and in the end sang the night away because of unaccustomed whisky. And the next day we did another fifty miles, always following close to the embankment in the hope that unkind providence would suddenly relent and send a locomotive snorting down to see the state of the road. Nothing was seen but derelict rails and broken temporary bridges, and from section to section I was passed on

by men sitting on the top of building materials who implored me to urge the immediate despatch of provisions and, above all, of absinthe.

At last, at Changte-fu, a big city, a section was reached which was cut off, it is true, but possessed two locomotives which could go forty or fifty kilometres up to the next big broken bridge. And here I learned that every morning at five a passage could be snatched if the engine-driver was good-humoured. As I dismissed my carters the boil-stricken one made such a mournful countenance that I thrust on him two extra dollars. And then, as he was leaving, with joyful air he informed me that his boil had burst an hour before.

On the morrow arriving before daylight at the station we found a closed van hitched to the engine, and learnt that a fresh experience was to be had — a cholera-stricken European would go north with us. The Italian conductor who whimpered me this information told me he had not come so far from home to die of cholera, and that he would allow the train to go off without him, if the patient turned up in time enough to take his place. He, the Italian, would die for no one — never, never. It was not until after several hours' wait that a big official chair with bearers in official hats and incomplete trouserings appeared on the scene, and the Italian, fortifying himself with brandy, groaned aloud. It was evidently the patient. The chair was deposited, but to everyone's astonishment out stepped a dapper little Frenchman in a pearl-grey pongee suit, pearl-

grey gloves and a silver-knobbed stick, who politely raising his sun-helmet hoped that he had not unduly hurt the locomotive's feelings by the delay. We stared in surprise, and the Italian nervously asked if he were the cholera fiend. "The past tense, if you please," said the polite Frenchman. "I had cholera, but you will see I am now cured; I go to make my convalescence."

The covered van was boarded by us all; the official chair taken to pieces and stowed inside; the ragged official chair-coolies climbed on to an open truck which was sought out and coupled on; and at last we were off. As we progressed towards Peking over an uneven and dangerous track, there were plenty of topics for conversation, for at regular intervals the train would be held up by a figure in a dirty white slop suit yelling lustily from the embankment, who, as he climbed on board, merely muttered the number of his kilometre by way of introduction. In the end there were a dozen of us, Italians, Belgians, Frenchmen, and Germans, all the Continent of Europe helping in the building of the non-British grand-trunk line.

Meanwhile the cholera convalescent in the pearl-grey gloves, seated in an easy chair, questioned each new-comer with a wave of his elegant silver-knobbed stick. At last it was clear. We could go on as far as a certain Sha-ho — how many sha-ho or "sandy rivers" are there in China, I wonder! — and then we would have to get out and go for an indefinite number of miles on foot, or as best we could, for

there was a huge bridge down and the whole track ripped up by the rain and the floods. Loud were the denunciations which were levelled against the contractors, the directorate and everyone connected with the overseeing of this railway construction, by all these men. The summer freshets rushing down from the West had swollen every river and stream into a raging torrent, and cut away everything as clean as a giant knife could have done. Loud, also, were the denunciations against the *compagnies d'étude*, or surveying parties, which instead of doing their work properly and studying the rainy-season question had frittered their time away. But it was the bridge work and the masonry which aroused the greatest ire. Masonry had been built with a fifty centimetre foundation on sandy river bottoms — that had been found everywhere. There were no sluices in embankments where anyone might have seen flood waters would rush; the temporary bridge-building had all been done with rotten timbers to save money and to make money — these were some of the comments made by this motley assembly of railway-men.

Thus passing the time away as we crashed heavily and dangerously forward, it was not until a great shout was raised from the open truck behind us that we forgot all about railway corruption and peered out. The chair coolies on the next truck were lying on their stomachs and hanging over the edge of their conveyance looking at the track behind us. Somebody laughed, and then with the aid of field-

glasses we understood. Chair coolie number 14 had only fallen off the train and was now sitting at the bottom of the railway embankment half-a-mile away ruefully rubbing his head. His *confrères* continued gazing at him with the open-mouthed Chinese astonishment, which is more curiosity than anything else, for two or three minutes more, and then turning over on their backs they forgot the entire affair. Men are sometimes killed when they fall off trains — this one had only hurt his head; he was very lucky. No one thought of stopping the train; he would have to catch us up later on, on foot.

By noon the engine was rocking so savagely that the driver pulled her up. Shading his eyes from the sun he pointed ahead. The track was in all truth a railway in the air; it had been caught by the freshets and been twisted, sleepers and all, twenty feet high off the embankment. It was obviously time to dismount.

The official chair was put together again, the chair coolies lifted up the cholera convalescent, and we moved forward, with our impedimenta streaming out raggedly behind us for hundreds of yards after the entertaining Chinese fashion. Presently after a refreshing walk in the midday sun we reached the remains of a bridge with a repentant river of sand that had caused all the trouble flowing thickly beneath it. Hundreds of coolies were here splashing in the water, cooling off after six hours' hard work on the bridge. We climbed gingerly across dangerous spans and warped girders, and our baggage

dutifully following performed miracles in acrobat feats. One more coolie fell, this time from the bridge into the water, and all were pleased beyond words. He had been sitting on the top of a box which he should have been carrying, and which he had placed on a rail with not a single other thing between him and the water. Then lighting a cigarette and feeling as comfortable as only a Chinaman can do in such circumstances he had involved himself in a heated argument as to whether this was half-way or not. The only thing which appeared to make him angry at falling thirty feet into the water was that he lost his cigarette; and as he ferried the box ashore only sharp words could induce him to stay his search for that cigarette-end. Far down-stream an official hat could be seen floating; and the cholera patient, to whom all this luxury belonged, gloomily stated that it was the fourth which had been lost in twenty-four hours. He did not expect to reach Peking with anything but his own gloves and stick.

Thus gaily shedding coolies and official hats, we were finally rescued by trolleys and pushed on to a small railway settlement where there were a dozen white men working out cubes and playing with drawing instruments. For two days we moved on slowly thus by trolley, with our baggage rejoining us late at night in a manner which was never explained, and which it would not be meet to inquire into. Finally, six days from the Yellow River, we at last reached sections which had been undamaged by

the rains, and in one spell of eleven hours we ran by fast train past the big cities of Chentingfu and Paotingfu with great crowds of native passengers boarding us, until, sixteen days from Hankow, the mighty walls of Peking loomed up, and curling through a breach in the city wall we rushed up to the new station, which is but a stone's throw from the main entrance to the palace.

CHAPTER VII

TRUNK RAILWAYS AS POLITICAL WEAPONS

When the Treaty of Shimonoseki, signed on the 17th April, 1895, had terminated the disastrous Japanese war, the Peking Court party and high Chinese officials all the Empire over, were somewhat anxious to reform things. It is true so-called military reforms had already been tried — witness the foreign-drilled troops of Pechili and Southern Manchuria, Chang Chih-tung's small modern army, and the building of "impregnable" Port Arthur; but all these measures and many others had proved broken reeds and something further had to be done. The real world of China was not very much disturbed over Korean and Manchurian disasters; but high officialdom was being impeached right and left, and the omnipotent Empress Dowager and her proud Manchus were very wrath at the course events had taken. So opinions were called for from those qualified to speak, and soon memoranda began to appear. Chang Chih-tung wrote his secret memorial, followed up by more open documents in which China was exhorted to learn. Sir Robert

Hart followed with a vast memorandum entitled the *P'an Lun;* Li Hung Chang in disgrace, and somewhat comically stripped of his little Yellow Riding Jacket, advocated doing everything possible; others added to this reform-din; and therefore the Court party decided that the time had manifestly arrived when something would have to be done.

But what? It was certainly a difficult question, for there were so many things which appeared equally necessary, that no one knew which should be given first place. But after a time the Peking Government took its inevitable course along the line of least resistance — that is along a line which would not upset anybody's ancient rights and squeezes. It decided that railways were good and necessary things, and that perhaps they would effect the miracles which were so needed to rehabilitate China in her own esteem and in the esteem of all the world. China had also been helped in this decision, quite incidentally of course, by the chief partner of the triplicate of Powers which had forced Japan to retrocede its war-prize — the Liaotung. Russia all through 1895 had been preparing and exchanging memoranda through the agency of the astute and indefatigable Count Cassini; and in 1896 this coquetting had culminated in the famous Cassini Convention, denounced by everybody as untrue because its publication had not been foreseen. The Cassini Convention offered at least a strong advocacy of railways — *vide* both the majestic preamble (in which the Imperial High Commissioners, the

Manchu princes, and the great officers of the Crown are stated to have conferred and agreed with Count Cassini over railway matters), and also the first five articles of the same instrument, which are monopolised by the railway question. Therefore, as the principle of the expediency of railways had been admitted, let railways be built. Already Tientsien was being linked with Peking; another extension was being built on to Paotingfu, and a second to Shanhaikwan, whilst Manchuria was fully provided for. It was now merely a question as to who should build other iron-ways.

The matter proceeded in the characteristic Chinese way. As early as February, 1896, a Chinese company had been actually formed to construct the vast trunk-line and the necessary branches between Canton and Peking, a system which would necessitate two thousand miles of track being built. But the capital fixed upon as necessary, thirty million taels, or say four million sterling, was absurdly inadequate, and, moreover, as native capitalists showed but little inclination to invest their money in this purely Chinese scheme, the project soon fell through. Chang Chih-tung, of the Wuchang-Hankow satrapy, and Shêng Hsûan-huai (better known to the Western world as Shêng Taotai), who were most interested in the matter, jointly memorialised the Throne on the subject and pointed out the difficulties; and in reply they were ordered, also after the manner of Chinese officialdom, "to investigate" the subject once more. It is

here necessary to explain that both of these officials, the one of the highest provincial rank, *i.e.* a Viceroy, and the other a mere detached Taotai, who was Li Hung Chang's right-hand man in business affairs, were pecuniarily interested in the success of the affair because they had already opened up iron and coal mines, and established foundries on the middle Yangtsze, which they thought would make for them vast fortunes if railway-building was all that the Westerners said. Shêng Taotai, although of no very exalted rank, represented the business-side of that versatile man, Li Hung Chang, whose *protégé* he was, and "managed" for the veteran statesman such ill-assorted undertakings as the Imperial Chinese Telegraphs, the China Merchants' Steam-ship Company, Shanghai Cotton and Silk Mills, and other official and semi-official ventures, all of which have been financed with official moneys. Li Hung Chang was therefore also concerned. Viceroy Chang Chih-tung and Shêng Taotai now laid their heads together and began to think. Offers were already coming in from foreign capitalists, and these were therefore investigated. In December of 1897 these two officials sent in a final memorial stating that as the National Treasury was empty, and as Chinese merchants and gentry could not be induced to find all the money, it was necessary to go after all to the foreigner. Continuing, they confessed ingenuously that their original intention was to recommend the application of a certain American group, but as the American terms had been too

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A Bridge on the Pekin Railway.

severe Belgium had been approached. (Later on the true position of Belgium in the matter will be discussed.) The memorialists went on to point out that Belgium was a country of insignificant size; that it had no entangling alliances; that its dense population was the surprise of Europe; and ended by impressively recommending the Belgian tender as the very best which could possibly be found. The Peking mandarinate, who knew what was behind all this, were delighted with such wisdom. Here indeed was the right country; quickly sign the preliminary contract!

In December, therefore, this contract was signed; in June 1898, the final contract was entered into and became generally known; and in August of the same year it was ratified by the Tsung-li Yamen. It is true that the concession included only the half-trunk — that is to say the Hankow-Peking line — and did not openly deal with the hardly less important Canton-Hankow section. But of this more must be said later.

In 1898, therefore, the Hankow-Peking Belgian railway concession was an indisputable fact, for better or for worse, and its building promptly began. The English engineers, who in the employ of the Imperial Chinese Railways (the Peking-Tientsien-Shanhaikwan line) had half-completed the extension on to Paotingfu, handed over their work to the Belgian syndicate; and in spite of the protests addressed by various Ministers Plenipotentiary to the now defunct Tsung-li Yamen, this portion of

the grand trunk was entirely surrendered to Belgian intriguers.

At the beginning of 1899 the publication of the Hankow-Peking Railway Company's prospectus in Brussels by the *Société Belge pour l'étude des chemins de fer en Chine*—the full name of the *concessionnaire* company—did much to dispel any illusions which may still have existed on the subject; for the project now stood unmasked, and it was clear that instead of being a purely Belgian commercial venture, the railway company was more than half French, and that Paris was both directorially and financially far more powerful in the matter than Brussels. And in those days Paris stood directly for Russia.

It is here illuminating to halt a minute and refresh the memories of those who may have temporarily forgotten the exact course of events following after the timely publication of the Cassini Convention in the autumn of 1896. No sooner had the publication of this much-discussed Convention taken place than it was denounced by both parties, Russia and China, and it was promptly followed by a separate and apparently perfectly open agreement between the Chinese Government and the Russo-Chinese Bank, whereby the latter, *inter alia*, undertook to form a company, to be called the Chinese Eastern Railway Company, which would construct a railway from the Trans-Baikal province across Manchuria to a point on the Ussuri railway — thus connecting the Baikal regions and the Siberian railway with

Vladivostock and the Russian Pacific sea-board. This Russo-Chinese agreement made no mention of a railway running down to Southern Manchuria and the coasts of Liaotung such as had been tentatively provided for by the Cassini Convention. It was not until Port Arthur was occupied in the winter of 1897–1898, and the Port Arthur Leasing Agreement drawn up, that the question of a railway down the Gulf of Liaotung and the ice-free seas was formally settled.

The so-called Belgian *concessionnaires* adopted an almost identical policy. For many weary months they attempted to secure the whole of the Canton to Peking grand trunk, and the necessary branches which would give them a control of a mileage exceeding two thousand miles; but as soon as they saw that even with the best will in the world the granting of this magnificent concession would be the signal for such a mighty outcry that the whole scheme would be wrecked and they themselves irrevocably discredited, they contented themselves with the politically more important half, the Hankow-Peking line, extracting a definite promise that in the event of the southern half being once more in the market they would have the first refusal.

It is unnecessary here to quote the entire text of the railway agreement, which is reproduced in full in the appendix. It will suffice to say that the capital of the Belgian Company was fixed at 112,500,000 francs, or £4,500,000 sterling, which was to be in

the nature of a loan to the Imperial Chinese Government bearing 5 per cent. interest; that the total length of the line is 1,200 kilometres or nearly 800 miles; and that interest was to be paid from capital account until railway receipts allowed it to be taken from working account profits. These are the main details brought to light by the publication of the final contract, but as the contract was somewhat modified on ratification, and as supplementary contracts have been since entered into, it is as well to trace the whole course of events.

Nominally the first position of the Belgian Syndicate was that of an obliging banker willing to advance money on a first-class security. For it should be stated that in the first instance the efforts of Chang Chih-tung and Shêng Hsûan-huai had resulted in 1896 in the formation of a Chinese Company, called the General Company (*Compagnie Générale*) in all the contracts, which had succeeded in raising Chinese capital to the amount of 13,000,000 taels, or a million and a half sterling, for the prosecution of this trunk-line building. The original idea was that this Chinese Company, with the assistance of the Peking Treasury, should build the Central Chinese Railways without foreign help. But events soon showing that the sum collected was entirely inadequate, and that the Chinese Government had no spare cash, foreign help had to be solicited. Now comes a curious story.

Two "groups" were tendering for this Canton to Peking Railway — an American Syndicate and a

Belgian Syndicate. The American Syndicate had been formed in 1895 by an influential group of Americans, among whom Senators Washburn, Cary, and Brice were the most prominent. The most distinguished members of this American group came to China and attempted to secure the whole Canton to Peking line; but Chinese officialdom found them far less complaisant than had been expected and soon refused to treat with them. The Belgian party had already shown that they were willing to stoop to anything and accept any terms so long as they obtained the concession; but as has already been written, it being feared that there would be great trouble if the whole line went to them, the concession was split into two sections and the southern half, the Canton-Hankow Railway, was finally offered to the American Syndicate on exactly the same terms as the Belgians had already accepted in private. As the Washburn group could have with difficulty retired entirely from China after their strenuous initial efforts, on the 14th April, 1898, they quietly signed at Washington with the Chinese Minister, Wu Ting-fang, a preliminary contract in which they undertook to lend £4,000,000 sterling and construct the Canton-Hankow Railway on the same terms as the Belgians had accepted in the case of the Hankow-Peking Railway. In other words, the American group undertook to build with their own money for the Chinese General Company the half-trunk. This was the first stage.

The publication of these various agreements

aroused a great deal of attention. Indeed the storm against the Belgian invasion of the British sphere became so violent that the Tsung-li-Yamen was forced to visit its displeasure on Li Hung Chang, the prime mover in the whole matter; to grant to England, on certain conditions, the building of the Tientsien-Chinkiang Railway, and to accede to the demands of the Anglo-Italian Peking Syndicate. But although English opinion had been so much excited, the Russo-Franco-Belgian combination, which was behind the nominal Belgian Syndicate, was in the year 1898 so strong that not only was the original Belgian concession upheld, but both at Peking and Shanghai the Ministers and Consuls-General of these three Powers protested violently that the granting of the American Concession was a breach of good faith against the Belgian group, who had already offered to lend all the money necessary in a manner which would better suit Chinese pockets! Fortunately, however, in Chang Chih-tung an official less complaisant than the avaricious Shêng existed; and accordingly in the final American contract signed at Hankow it was specifically stipulated that the American group could not transfer their rights to other nations or to men of any other nationality, and that any such transfer would not only vitiate the whole agreement but entitle China to cancel it immediately. But as soon as it was learnt by the Continental party that the American group proposed to ask British capital to participate in the building of their line, they re-opened their attacks with

surprising audacity. What the final result has been will shortly be seen.

Meanwhile the so-called Belgian Syndicate proceeded to work on the Hankow-Peking in 1899; but before construction had advanced very far the Boxer outbreak sent the construction-parties fleeing for their lives and saw a certain portion of the completed track ripped up. For this damage the Belgian Company filed a claim for thirty million francs, which sum was included in the general Boxer indemnity, although the actual damage was assessed by competent authorities at only three million francs.

The effacement of England in 1900, and the solidarity of the whole Continent of Europe, now made the Belgian group become even more daring. The original Brussels prospectus had disclosed that three-fifths of the money was French; that the Belgian Syndicate was controlled in Paris; and that in the event of the American Syndicate failing to construct the Canton Railway the *Société d'étude des Chemins de fer en Chine* had a paper in its pocket, directly giving it the power to take over the southern section of the grand trunk on the same terms on which it had accepted the construction of the northern section. The final agreement already referred to had also disclosed that the Russo-Chinese Bank were the bankers of the Company; that all the funds, the debenture-service, etc., etc., were handled by the same concern; and that although, nominally, the railway accounts were to be managed by the Chinese Company, and the Belgians had only

to attend to construction and traffic management, the foreign group had absolute control of everything. After the Boxers, all masks were quickly thrown off and certain new agreements, whose nature it has not been possible to learn, entered into. The most important points actually concerning the Hankow-Peking road are believed to be that Belgian capital may now be increased to 200,000,000 francs (£8,000,000 sterling) by the issue of bonds on the same terms as the first issues; that the Belgian Syndicate is to receive a definite percentage of the net profits over and above bond interest — a percentage stated to be 20 per cent. of the net earnings; and that if the Chinese Government decides to buy back the line after 1907, as it has power to do under the 1898 contract, it must reimburse the Belgian Syndicate for all its expenses.

But the most interesting matter after 1900 became the struggle centring round the Canton-Hankow Concession. The Boxer outbreak had delayed all work in this second section of the grand trunk, and it was not until 1902 that details were arranged to commence construction. Then the American China Development Company — the name adopted by the *concessionnaires* — sent out its engineers, in spite of all Belgian opposition, and commenced work. An initial issue of bonds, aggregating $3,000,000 gold, was made in New York, surveys were completed, and the Canton-Samshui section was rapidly taken in hand. But it soon transpired that of this initial issue of £600,000 made in New York, the

Belgian group had quietly bought two-thirds, and that in China they were following a definite course of action and still heckling the Chinese officials. Then, as this proved not so effective as was desired, Belgian opposition in China suddenly ceased. The reason was soon clear. Colonel Thys, a confidential agent of the King of the Belgians, who has acquired a certain fame in Congo, went to New York, and there with another worthy, General Whittier, commenced a deliberate frontal attack. The Board of Directors in New York was soon overwhelmingly Belgian, and by the end of 1903 the Continental party was so strong that the accounts of the New York Board were disputed by the Brussels bondholders, all building on the Canton line was stopped, and the capital supplied by American subscribers was refunded by the *Société d'Étude* so as to have absolute control.

This daring action so alarmed the Chinese that they commenced an agitation for the cancellation of the whole contract. Then, in 1904, the United States Government stepped in and further complicated matters by declaring that the Canton Railway Company was still an American concern, and recognised as such by the Washington State Department. And since then — that is for a period of nearly two years — everything has been in a hopeless dead-lock, whilst unending and undignified squabbles have been going on.

Such is a brief and hurried account of a most curious series of international affairs, involving many

millions sterling of capital. Many points have not been touched on because their discussion alone would demand the pages of a volume. But all which must be written is not yet finished. Two most important branch-lines are at the present moment being taken in hand by the same Belgian Syndicate as the construction of the northern section of the grand trunk nears completion. These are, first, the Chênting-fu-Taiyûan-fu Railway, the concession for which was obtained six years ago by the Russo-Chinese Bank, and which is a narrow gauge railway which one day will dart into Mongolia; secondly, the Honan-fu Kaifeng-fu branch line which belongs to a subsidiary Belgian group, originally stated to be a rival concern, but which by thus unmasking shows its true character. The former of these two railways will be some 250 kilometres long; the latter 300 kilometres; thus immediately adding 350 miles to so-called Belgian control. But the larger aspect of these railways is fully discussed elsewhere; the present examination aims rather at a microscopic analysis than a general survey.

Two weeks spent along the course of the Hankow-Peking Railway were sufficient to bring many things to light. The effects of all these various intrigues and counter-intrigues are clearly reflected in construction-work, in traffic control, and general management. It is no exaggeration to say that all is confusion, and that bribery and corruption are rampant among the native staff. The one object of the construction-parties has been to hasten on

the work at all costs, paying not much attention to anything excepting rapid embankment-building and plate-laying. Bridges come down with the summer floods and wreck trains; but nobody cares much excepting that it means the spending of more money. Sometimes men are killed in such accidents, sometimes not; but shoulders are shrugged. Some of the bridge-building is actually good, but it is all *mesquin* compared, for instance, with the work in Manchuria. Along the railway I met Italians — those universal helps in world railway-building — who had assisted in the building of the Great Sungari and Nonni River bridges. "Those were true bridges," they exclaimed with fervour. "The foundations were wonderful, the masonry splendid, and every calculation exact and perfect. Here it is quite different." Having myself climbed perilously across the remaining shreds of several bridges, I was able to appreciate this. Sometimes, as I have said, there is a good bridge, but only the summer floods of 1904, which have frightened everybody very much and caused many dismissals, will make such a state of affairs general. Only the Great Yellow River bridge, which will be three kilometres long, and one of the most powerful structures in the world, is a notable exception. At the Yellow River there are now two great camps of Europeans and thousands of Chinese, and construction work, costing as it will a million sterling and more, has had to be the most careful possible. Any jerry-building finds the river taking a prompt revenge,

for the terrible current and the shifting sands are enough to cause the collapse of almost any work. Hydraulic pile-driving is proceeding night and day, and steel screw-piles (*pieux à vice*) are being put down to a depth of 150 feet below the river-bed without finding a rocky bottom. There is no end to these sandy deposits, and the masonry will have to rest on foundations which some declare will inevitably sink. But the best expert opinion believes that the bridge will stand even the terrible tests to which it will be inevitably submitted, as the greatest precautions are being taken. The rest of the work, the building of embankments, culverting, rail-laying, and ballasting, etc., has been extremely poor, and, as in the case of the Manchurian railway, has had to be largely done over again. The organisation of the staffs has also been marked by the grossest incompetence, and an internecine warfare is constantly raging between *la construction* and *l'exploitation*. Sections thrown open to traffic have to be handed back to the constructing engineers with mutual recriminations on each side. It is stated, I do not know with what truth — that the engineer-in-chief receives a bonus of 1,000 francs on every kilometre he opens to traffic, which would mean that the 1,200 kilometres of road would give him a total bonus of £48,000. The salaries are high, the chief engineer receiving £4,000 a year — a vast sum for a Belgian; chief construction engineers £2,000 a year, and other salaries ranging with allowances from £300 to £1,500. Some classes of skilled

workmen, such as the highly educated French *monteurs de pont*, receive as much as a thousand francs a month. All nationalities of the Continent abound — Belgians, Frenchmen, Italians, Germans, Swedes, etc., being found mixed in an odd *pot-pourri*. Everybody is always fighting with everybody else, and consequently Italians are being more and more favoured. They express but little resentment at being left for weeks at a time alongside of a solitary cask of nails and some rails so long as the macaroni and the Fernet-Branca do not give out. Many of the small contractors — in fact nearly all — are Italians who have worked under many flags. These are the men who have been in Egypt, in North and South America, in Asia Minor, and many other places, and can tell you many odd stories of different kinds of corruption in railway-building. But this Belgian concern is the "softest thing," to use an Americanism, they have ever touched, and they are quite frank about it. I met one *impresario*, a man of no education, who would be well paid in Italy with five lire a day, who stated that he had amassed £5,000. He said that the Belgians were an excellent people — "so careless," he put it!

The manner in which the recruiting of Europeans for this railway-building is carried out is singular. Any one of the five or six different offices of the so-called Belgian Company do a little of it when the spirit moves them. Sometimes, for instance, Brussels gets wind of the fact that engine-drivers are needed. Determined that Paris shall not act before it,

men are chosen and hastily sent out. Incidentally they are told many fairy tales to entice them to go. One Belgian said that a director in Brussels had told him that all trains in China go fifty kilometres an hour because, as the country is dangerous, speed is counted a protection! He was at the time of my meeting him working a small construction engine dating from the year One on a ballasting-line, and cursing the day he had left his own country. All the materials and machinery are coming from either France or Belgium. The Compagnie Five-Lilles must be a big shareholder, as enormous quantities of its steel manufactures are everywhere to be seen. The rails are partly supplied by the Hanyang iron-works, but as many of these are stated to have been defective, European mills are now getting the largest share of these orders. All the station-buildings and arrangements along the line are mean and poor, and show none of the thoroughness of the newly constructed German line in Shantung.

But it is in the exploits of the Chinese staff that the most amusing episodes are to be found. Never have I seen such calm and such open squeezing! The bad effects of two rival authorities are here witnessed, the original Chinese Company and the Belgian Syndicates having a nominally joint control. Almost every bale of merchandise and every Chinese passenger contributes something towards the up-keep of the native staff. On construction-trains the hat is sent round just as it used to be in

BELGIAN RAILWAY BUILDING.

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Manchuria in 1902 by the Russian engine-drivers, and everybody pays something. The railway police beat and squeeze everybody, whilst the Chinese station-masters look on. So hard has the screw been turned on that native contractors have reverted to ways grossly corrupt even for Chinese. Not only do they do jerry-work, but the coolies under them, paid at 4,500 cash a month (say ten shillings), actually receive but 2,800 cash — (say six shillings and sixpence) — the rest being pocketed by their shift-bosses.

The Belgian management is much concerned at this state of affairs, but can do nothing, absolutely nothing, to improve matters. Not possessing a single *employé* who has any knowledge of Chinese, all are in the hands of the natives. The construction profits must have been enormous, for, as there is no buying-commission openly allowed, it must be wrapped up in the cost-price of materials. On the Chinese side there is no control, no inspection or auditing of accounts, no examination of work by independent Government engineers — each party of this ill-assorted concern is left to work out its own destiny.

In spite of this the prospects of the railway are magnificent, and in capable hands it would be a veritable gold-mine. Divided into two distinct halves by the Yellow River, the northern and southern sections have already distinct characteristics. Along the northern section there are no less than five enormous cities to be served — Peking,

Paotingfu, Chentingfu, Changtefu, and Shuntefu, with a number of minor places of importance. The passenger traffic is already very great here; in ten years it will be phenomenal. On the southern section the inexhaustible soil of Honan and the various rivers will bring raw produce in great masses to the railway to be conveyed to Hankow. Basing my calculations on the results obtained by the northern Chinese railways, the net profits of this line should amount to at least half a million sterling a year immediately, and to a million or two in five or ten years. China needs this money very badly, and later on it will be seen how this political weapon, forming one of the results of the Russian advance, may be broken into pieces, and be changed into a sound Chinese Government enterprise, which will be of the greatest help in restoring the financial equipoise in China, so disturbed by the history of the last ten years.

UNDER THE PEKING WALLS.

A RIDING CAMEL FROM MONGOLIA.

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CHAPTER VIII

PEKING UNDER THE FOREIGN HEEL

In the old days before the Boxers, the Peking railway station was far beyond the walls of even the Chinese city — which has not a tithe of the lustre of the Tartar city, and is rather humble. Then you had to ride or drive from Machiapu, which is three miles beyond the Yung Ting Mên or Gate of Eternal Prosperity, and proceed two miles straight through the Chinese town, until you came on the mighty bastions and keeps of the *Ch'ien Mên* or Main Entrance to the Tartar City, where the pleasure of your fantastic entry smote you full, and you hugged yourself even in the choking dust at an enchanted prospect which had no equal. For here would be great strings of camels halted in the wrong places, and calling streams of blasphemy from every other mother's son who trod or rode the roads; camels laden with merchandise and coal, and snarling shrilly after the manner of their kind at the indignities to which they were put. If it were winter there would be plenty of riding camels too, with Mongol men and women seated on top, kicking

their beasts along in their coloured boots, and threading through the crush with marvellous skill. Sometimes there were two people mounted on a single animal, the woman on the pillion, clutching tightly to the man and laughing down at all who stared. Then there were strange palanquins slung between two mules, with sword-armed and dust-covered cavaliers ambling alongside, who had come all the way down through the great passes from distant Shansi and Shensi, and sometimes even from Mohammedan Kansu, which is very far. As you swung round the great keep, you would see to your left, out through a side entrance, the Tartar Wall, mighty and massive, stretching away mile after mile, and capped and crowned at regular intervals with great *lou* or storied towers. Below the wall was a vast sand-stretch, furrowed by countless cart-wheels and often encumbered with thousands of camels coming or going, where you might gallop and gallop until you were fairly pumped and you reached a camel-back bridge — an almost perfect half-moon of stone, which, hoisting its back angrily in the air, advised immediate caution.

Once inside the Tartar city you would meet other princely Manchu carts, which have their wheels set very far back and are painted red so that all may be apprised of the precious burden they carry. Such carts were accompanied by rough Manchu outriders seated on stocky ponies and ambling mules, who in the old days would not hesitate at driving you from the road or riding you down should you block the

way. Strange cries filled the air, and the choking dust floated so thick at times that men and beasts appeared like phantoms coming and going. It was delightful. It was such a new world because it was so old and smelt so of Cambalue and of Marco Polo, and all the other things which are dear because they belong to that which has departed. It is true the smells were too piercing for some and made them forget everything but their nostrils; but history has no place for noses; only for eyes and ears that are not too sensitive.

Now in this year, four years after a summer's madness, you will see none of this, nothing at all; or so little that it is not worth counting. It has all gone, apparently irretrievably, and there is but little poetry left.

The disillusion begins when you are far outside Peking. Your train, which has been rapidly steaming along, suddenly slows down and stops. You rub your eyes and look again. Yes, there can be no doubt; this is the old Peking race-course with its waving ring of willow trees surrounding the mile of mud track, and the little hills behind it which mask a stretch of doubtful water, where at dawn or sundown you might pick up a duck or two. But instead of the long picnic ride necessary in former days, the railway blazons forth on its station sign "Champ de courses," which means that you are borne here now prosaically and detestably by rail, killing the memories of other days.

The train moves on again, and then with the

sudden railway-roar you pass through the outer wall of the Chinese city, and (horror of horrors!) are running along this great sandy stretch under the Tartar Wall, which of old was the private and inviolate property of camel-trains, mule-litters, travelling carts and galloping ponies, and is now given over to the odious iron-way. As you come nearer to the great Ch'ien Men you scarce believe your eyes; native coal-yards, grimy and jerry-built, back against the majestic Tartar Wall itself, whilst their precious hong names stand out everywhere in big, insolent characters. At last your train, since it has had enough of it too, slides along a mud and stone platform and a babel of tongues smites your ears. You are just below the Ch'ien Men and rickshaw hordes press round you. Even the rickshaws and their coolies, formerly numbered in a few timid dozens, and now running into many hundreds, have all changed for the worse. Tientsien has sent up its sweepings in men, and tattered creatures crowd around speaking a dialect which is not that of the great capital. A few Peking carts linger also at the station, but there is little confidence on their drivers' faces, for they have been relegated to the position of the London growler, whilst the rickshaws, speeding more swiftly, have become the hansoms.

Now, you are trundled away by your Tientsien sweepings, and rush through the Ch'ien Men keep, which is walled and enclosed in a curious and vulgar fashion to protect the mule and cart traffic from the terror of the trains. Above you, instead of the great

lou which were burnt during 1900, dirty bamboo matting hides the furtive reconstruction which has been commenced, and once again stopped because funds are lacking. Peter Ibbetson coming back to his *Mare d'Auteuil* could not have felt more gloomy. You pass through the Gates, face the Palace entrance and the Ta Ch'ing Men, or Dynastic Gate, for a moment, and then turn east into the Legation quarter.

The Legation quarter! It is a Legation quarter no more, but a rude and ugly semi-fortress split up into a hundred great walled enclosures that are an insult to the eye. It is 1900, and its disastrous consequences projected into infinity and perpetuated in gloomy brickwork — insult upon insult; the sore salted. You continue in the half-dark past sentries and sentry boxes, down the long Legation street which runs parallel to the Tartar wall, and only after many minutes pass out of the fortifications at the German end, where an embattled gate-way having steel gates fitted with machine-gun port-holes and closed loop-holes can bar your way. Not until you are under the Ha-Ta Gate can you breathe again, released from the fortress-like oppression.

But it is now no easy job in the complete dark to find a hotel. In the old days there was one hotel only, famous for its Swiss host, who became a veritable Hercules during the siege. There you would always find a curious band of concession-hunters, globe-trotters, and sight-seers sitting at the

feet of the Swiss, and taking advice on subjects ranging from trunk-line building to excursions at extortionate rates to the Great Wall of China. For the hotel-keeper was a great man and the confidant of palace eunuchs, and being skilled in the knowledge of the underworld could effect many things. Now all that has gone too, and there are a half dozen ramshackle inns crudely adapted to the white man's use, and smelling of the recent passage of occupation armies. Along the streets a spasmodic road-repairing has also occurred to conciliate the now all-powerful foreigner. On the night of my arrival it was doubtless with the view of impressing on me the exact nature of these reforms, and showing how the road-gods were offended, that my coolies slipped and allowed me to roll into a deep pit with the vehicle upside down and myself safe inside. But although I was damaged it was nothing to what had happened to the unfortunate men engaged in earning a livelihood in this interesting fashion. With a loud splash two had fallen into a deep pool of water along the roadway, whilst the third had been flung on some half-chiselled flags of stone. All were rescued excepting one in the pool, whose fate I have not yet learnt. A broken straw hat floating on the face of the waters was apparently all that was left of him; but from the muffled curses of his comrades it was plain that he was not dead but had left them to face my rising wrath. It is in such appropriate fashion that you make your arrival.

When morning comes in Peking the impressions

of the night before are not allowed to fade, but are revived with vigour. At half-past six a rapid and well-sustained roll of machine-gun fire and much blowing of infantry bugles made me spring from my bed. Had another siege begun? But an answering servitor soon explained. It was only the Germans, who were always practising morning, noon, and night, and this firing was a constant thing. I remembered then that the Germans had been of late demanding a big drill-ground, and that the native newspapers had plaintively asked how long Baron von Ketteler and 1900 were going to be remembered.

It was therefore to the German compounds and cantonments that I first went. How greedy the Germans have been! Right up to the great Ha-Ta Gate they have stripped a great plot of ground bare so that there shall be no cover to protect an enemy from their rifle and machine-gun fire. On this glacis, which can be rapidly covered with barbed wire and other obstructions, kept carefully ready, you have but a taste of that which is to follow; for immediately behind is the fortified wall with loop-holes so carelessly blocked that any one can see it has been prepared for lines of riflemen and for nothing else. Behind this you come on great, ugly, German barracks, styled the Waldersee Caserne in memory of the great commander who arrived when everything was finished in 1900. German infantry and gunners lounge at the barrack gates and gaze with that insolence which is the birthright

of the disciplined Prussian. For hundreds of yards the German lines extend down this main street, and it is not until the French Legation is reached on the opposite side that the German slice seems about to end. A great Catholic church has been raised by the French where the Boxers and Imperialists were finally held in check by the gallant French sailors in 1900; and then, following one another rapidly, Legation after Legation, with vast walls enclosing each, and armed sentries at every gate, entrance, and corner, spread a half mile and more down the street. Sometimes there are privileged buildings such as banks, shops, and future hotels pushing in between the walled compounds of the foreign Missions, but these are mere side-shows — the Legations are the main attractions. Thus you may walk down dusty Legation street until you come to the famous canal, the Yû-Ho, which in the old days was the central rallying-place for all the bad smells of this world. Then a doubtful stream of muddy water a few inches deep coursed down the middle, whilst piles of garbage and general rubbish were carelessly dumped over its banks to be finally blown away in small daily quantities when the dust storms blew. That is all gone now too, and you would almost pass by the old canal without noticing it were it not for a new gateway which has been pierced through the Tartar Wall. This is the well-known *Shui Men* or Water Gate, through which the first men — Sikhs — came in 1900. They had merely to kick down the wooden-

barred gate, rotten with age, to find themselves within the defenders' lines.

In memoriam of these things the archway of the Water Gate has been heightened, the canal bridged over with masonry and brick-work, and a flat road now leads straight to the second railway station of the Tientsien line, which is just beyond the Tartar Wall. The canal itself, which runs away due north until half a mile away it creeps under the pink walls of the Imperial City, has been narrowed to half its size by European sappers, and neatly bricked and parapeted; and nothing remains of the waterway which was designed in old days to feed the broad moats of the Forbidden City so that no enemy might steal in when active warfare was proceeding.

At the other end of Legation street a huge French hospital, where the wounded of a second siege, which the Legations are inviting, might be treated in hundreds, rears itself and spreads over acres of ground. And at this end even the Dutch, whose interests in China are negligible, have added immensely to their grounds and brought up fifty marines. And the Belgians have done the same. Alone, decadent Spain is content to protect itself by sandwiching in between other Legations. Of the others, every one has from fifty to three hundred guards, and some proclaim that even these are insufficient.

Once beyond this Legation square, the high walls which enclose give it an additional significance. The Legation area has become a mere Ghetto shut

off from the rest of the world and knowing but little of what is going on in China. No matter if you turn north, south, east, or west, the walls follow you everywhere with their loop-holed eyes, and sternly bring you back to the grimness of the situation. The loop-holes, it is true, are mostly blocked up, but the lighter patches of colour show you when the sun strikes exactly where each rifleman would take his stand; and every Chinese and Manchu in Peking knows this equally well. And then you can enter only through the armoured gates, which are only four in number.

At the northern entrance the gates which give access to the foreigners' Forbidden City have been prettily embattled — the gentle fancy of a British architect to soothe outraged feelings. Coming in you see no sentry on the British side of the canal and you feel relieved. At least the English have had sense enough to know that an armed sentry paraded at a gateway does not protect, but merely irritates. Farther down this canal street is the main entrance of the British Legation, magnificent now as no other Legation in Peking, since to the spacious grounds of the former Manchu Prince have been added all those pieces of Chinese Government property lying on this side of the square. In the British Legation there is little enough military parade, but only new building going on.

But it is outside, across the canal, that your ire is aroused afresh. Immediately in front of you is a side entrance to the Japanese Legation on a half of

View of the Fortified Legations — The Eastern Entrance.

[*Face page* 202, *Vol. I.*

The Fortified Legations — Northern Entrance.

the fiercely contested Su-wang-fu of 1900. But it is not this which arouses your ire, for if ever men deserved to hold a piece of ground by right of conquest it is the gallant Japanese after the exploits of Colonel Shiba and his men. For it was they on this ground who fought for nearly two months until there was nothing much left of them or their positions. Another week or two and Chinese desperadoes, having pierced through this important outwork, would have been able to attack directly the British Legation — the base where were stored the women, children, and useless people during the siege — which would have been the beginning of the end. But look due north and you will see the cause for anger. Floating from the top of a high mound the Italian tricolour is to be seen, and beside it, almost flush with the top of the Legation walls so that they command a view of everything and are likewise seen by everybody, Italian sentries pace, pretty sailor-fellows with curled moustachios. Beside the flag-staff there is another mast, the Marconi mast, which connects Peking with Taku, and has been put up under the personal supervision of the Italian admiral. What are the Italians doing here? I will tell, because it makes instructive reading and shows how things are acquired in the Far East.

In 1900 when, after a very short struggle, the Italians were driven hastily out of their Legation, which was right round on the other side of the square near the French, no one knew exactly what to do with them. The French did not want them, for the

French are the premier Latins and esteem all others very poorly; so the Italian Minister and his staff fled ingloriously to the British Legation, and the Italian sailors tramped in there too, awaiting orders. It was then decided that as the Japanese and some English volunteers were garrisoning a quarter of a mile of front, it would not be derogatory if the main body of Italians were given a portion of this work. So they were given a mound, which commanded a portion of the defence — a mound which was almost exactly on the same spot as where the masts now stand. In ten days the Italians had fired away all their ammunition, and had to be given captured rifles with a few rounds apiece and told not to fire. A sortie undertaken by their commander, who was a brave man, ended in a *sauve qui peut* which was hushed up. Later on, with their commander dangerously wounded, they retired on occasions without orders, jeopardising the whole line of the defence, until they had, in the end, to be closely "sandwiched," which is an ignominious end.

But on the day of the relief the Italian tricolour went gaily enough up over the recovered mound and an immense piece of ground was staked off as a prize of victory. Italian sailors of the relieving columns were then bivouacked there, and in spite of great Japanese indignation could not be ousted. But not only this. To complete their grounds and to square them off, the Italians staked off a large part of Sir Robert Hart's compounds, on which lay

his ruined houses and offices. This proved too much for everybody. Dr. Morrison began telegraphing to the *Times;* the British Government looked like speaking ; and in the end the Italian Minister had to go and beg Sir Robert Hart to consent to what had been done or else the Italian Government would disgrace him. Sir Robert Hart, skilled in diplomacy, yielded, and thus the Italians, by a system of jumping other people's claims, have built themselves an enormous Legation which they garrison strongly with pretty sailors. Such accounts as this are useful in these days of shattered reputations; for strange things may yet happen in Peking once more.

At the north-east corner is the fourth entrance to the Legation fortress, and here the Austrians, on ground which they also abandoned without rhyme or reason in 1900 after the first shots had been fired, hold sway. And this entrance, with its doubled black walls and steel gates, is the most ugly of all. Revolver-armed Austrian sailors stand inside the gates and scan you closely as you walk, allowing no unauthorised Chinese to pass into their Forbidden City.

What else is there in Peking in this year of grace, with the mighty Russo-Japanese struggle raging more and more fiercely, and the petty Peking world more and more alarmed? Nothing, or at least nothing much; for the square-mile of armed and fortified Legations with their fifteen hundred guards, and a command rotating from one commander to

another, so that international jealousies may not appear on the surface, is the thing of all things in Peking, and everything else revolves round it — excepting one thing which I will presently explain. The very Tartar walls seem to have lost their old-time grandeur and appear almost dwarfed by the countless Legation walls and enclosures. The finest Tartar towers have all gone and have not been replaced; block-houses have been built on the Tartar Wall itself parallel to the eastern and western face of the fortress, so that no Chinese troops may fire down from this point of vantage on their enemies. And distances, too, have been nicely calculated so that at a given signal howitzers could drop shells from the Legations right on top of the Empress Dowager two miles away. It is a pleasant picture and gives a fine promise for the future. Even the native despatch-writers and teachers employed at the Legations have to seek their midday meals hurriedly in a little cook-house secreted at the back, because it is forbidden for Chinese to have any establishment whatsoever within the fortified lines. Chinese officials are forbidden to go openly through the foreign quarter, and many have been quite recently dragged from their carts and brutally treated by the common European soldiery, who are engaged in "protecting" their Ministers. And painted at the street corners are new names, invented by those who have done nothing for China; and now you may still stroll down the Boulevard d'Italie, or the Thomaun Strasse!

As I have already said, there is only one other thing worth seeing in Peking — it is no other than Dr. Morrison. Just as the Chinese Government watches the provinces and the Legations watch the Chinese Government, so does Dr. Morrison watch the Legations, which is the finest thing of all. For there is much to discover.

Outside the fortress limits, and not a thousand yards from the Austrian entrance, you will find the usual *porte-cochère* which adorns the houses of rich Chinese. A card is nailed over the usual Peking card-box and a furled Union Jack, ready to be stuck up, should eventualities justify it, is posted near: it is the private residence of the official correspondent of the *Times*. You shout at the door for the gate-keeper, for in official Peking there are no bells. A deep-voiced *Cha*, with the *a* pronounced after the Manchu fashion, which is very round and guttural, answers you, and a native gentleman, whom you have apparently disturbed in the middle of some absorbing occupation, comes out. No one is in or to be seen. There are three visitors' carts, but in the diplomatic world you can be manifestly out and as manifestly in. It is a matter of argument. After endless *pourparlers* and rapid internal arrangements, you are ushered silently into a room with a confused sound of voices somewhere near. You wait patiently. Then you become oddly conscious that there is someone else waiting equally patiently with but a glass door separating you, and that that someone is probably watching you. You conceal yourself

hastily in the depths of a chair and take up many newspapers which make an accursed rattle. Vague sounds tickle the tympanums of your ears, and the situation is becoming charming. Suddenly, when you least expect it, another door opens and a second person, blowing his nose so completely and efficiently that the essential features of the face are lost, passes rapidly out. It is worse than the dentist's. Then the third door opens and the third person quite openly comes out in the company of the Dr. Nikola of the higher journalism, and annoys you by manifestly talking for your ears about the war. At last you may have Dr. Morrison to yourself for a few moments — but not for very long, as the sounds from beyond the glass door become too ominous to be mistaken. For a minute you are asked to retire, and so, gallantly covering yourself with more newspapers and half swallowing the few remaining ones to choke the noises oozing from your throat, the terror of the glass door is at last over and the coast may seem completely clear. In this furtive fashion you unmask the Peking lion in his den. But his time is precious, since his word is now more powerful than that of the British Minister, which for years has not been very much, but which now, they protest, is a little more weighty. Other doors may now rattle insistent messages — so good-bye. You have convinced yourself that if the Legations watch the Chinese Government, which watches the provinces, they in turn are all equally well watched, in a manner which has caused, and still causes, the chan-

celleries of Europe often to curse and grind their teeth.

Beyond these things there is nothing to be seen in Peking, as I have already said. The accustomed sights, which are the great Temples, the outer ring of the Forbidden City, the Summer Palace, and the magnificent halls of many Princes, have now long been half-closed, and even the curio shops have not yet been re-stocked since the year of tribulation. Although the streets are much the same as ever, 1900 has left an extraordinary mark which four years have not sufficed to erase. What is it? You cannot answer in a few sentences. It is merely one of those things which you feel, and which all your senses and your Chinamen tell you is true. The very servants have all changed and are no longer recruited from the same class of men. Formerly Roman Catholic Bannermen, whose families date their allegiance to the Church of Rome from the seventeenth century, and who dwell in a vast district which surrounds Monseigneur Favier's famous Pei-t'ang, served in the Legations and the foreign quarter. After 1900 and the payment to native converts of a *per capita* indemnity for their losses, they withdrew to the bosoms of their families, and a new and vulgar race of serving-men with none of the old traditions has sprung up. The very Peking *wu-lai-tzu*, or beggars, have changed in appearance, and the beggars' guild must be almost dead. The famous porcelain shops have now but wretched collections, and their owners would rather talk about

the good old times than waste their breath inventing stories concerning the antiquity of vases recently delivered from the Kin-tê-chên factories, which are behind Kiu-kiang. The beautiful bronze instruments with their splendid dragon decorations in the old Peking observatory, which were the gifts of a Louis of France, have all disappeared, looted by the Germans, and now adorn the capital of the Mailed Fist. An unnoteworthy marble *p'ai-lou*, or commemorative arch, has been raised to the memory of poor Baron von Ketteler; and the rifle and machine-gun practice of the German Legation guards must make his valiant spirit, which never knew fear, to laugh in disgust. It is a sorry capital, this Peking in 1904, and unless the Japanese do their work thoroughly in Manchuria and certain other things are attended to, there is every chance that Sir Robert Hart's prophecy, mocked at by all those who know nothing of China, will one day be fulfilled. Surveying these petty armed Legations and this broken capital it is good to repeat these words and refresh short memories:

". . . The words 'imperil the world's future' will doubtless provoke a laugh — well, let them do so, but let them stand! Twenty millions or more of Boxers, armed, drilled, and disciplined, and animated by patriotic — if mistaken — motives will make residence in China impossible for foreigners; will take back from foreigners everything foreigners have taken from China; will pay off old grudges with interest; and will carry the Chinese

flag and Chinese arms into many a place that even fancy will not suggest to-day, thus preparing for future upheavals and disasters never even dreamed of. In fifty years' time there will be millions of Boxers in serried ranks and war's panoply at the call of the Chinese Government: there is not the slightest doubt of that! And if the Chinese Government continues to exist it will encourage, and it will be quite right to encourage, uphold, and develop this national movement which bodes no good for the rest of the world."

In sight of the fortified Legations with their garrison of fifteen hundred guards; their fussy little Ministers who are so full of importance and yet hate their virtual imprisonment; their Marconi mast guarded by pretty Italian sailors ready to flash a wave of alarm down to Taku; with Dr. Morrison watchful outside; the railway stations just beyond the Tartar wall: with all these things which, taken as a whole, make a great capital ridiculous and Seoul-like, it is time to examine the Chinese Government and the Manchu Court, and to attempt to gauge the feelings of these two important factors in the general situation, and to try and understand what may happen.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT AND THE MANCHU COURT

ONCE more, leading to yet another point of view, it is necessary to set out the landmarks of Chinese history.

Not long after the beginning of time, if we accept the chronology of the Bible, there were a good many Chinese distressing other people with their presence; and no sooner had they gathered themselves together again near the upper waters of the Yellow River, after their migration of some five thousand years ago, than they began organising themselves into petty States. Binding themselves together on the most approved communistic principles, as a protection against the indigenous peoples who must have surrounded them, they quickly developed the germs of their present system of government. One of their first leaders, Fu-shi, invented writing as well as a system of horary and cyclical notation, and framed the laws of marriage. Another ancient King placed agriculture in the high place it still occupies; a third invented currency and utensils of metal; and thus during the whole of the mythical period the

chiefs of the early Chinese fathers were the true leaders of their inconsiderable States and justified their positions by their industry and inventive powers.

By the time of the advent to power of the Emperor Yao, almost exactly four thousand years ago, the office of supreme ruler of the Chinese people had been firmly established. It did not become hereditary, however, for many centuries, and all through ancient history the misconduct of the sovereign, if continued and unbearable, brought about the prompt fall of his house, and the sceptre passed into more capable and worthy hands. The early idea of the Chinese people in the matter of their rulers is therefore clear and reasonable. The Emperor as the Son of Heaven was the *de facto* ruler and supreme chief of the State so long as he merited holding that office; but once he had forfeited the regard of his people he and all his relations were swept away without any regard for the semi-sacred character with which Chinese culture had invested the Throne.

In time the power of these early Emperors increased considerably, but it is evident that for many centuries they were in practice, however much they might be other things in theory, only the suzerains of a congeries of petty ducal or princely States, which spread from the confines of Mongolia to the banks of the Yangtsze-kiang, and which, so long as they were not unduly interfered with, delighted to recognise the virtues and attributes of the Son of Heaven,

who, in his Imperial Yellow, represented something of the power of the Great Unseen.

In the third century before Christ a change came. The Emperor Chi-Huang-ti, builder of that vast work, the Great Wall of China, in a fit of conceit and jealousy ordered that all the classics and literature of the country be destroyed by fire; that the Empire be divided up into provinces, and that the power of the feudal states and the haughty *literati* be once and for all crushed. This Emperor was partially successful, and although shortly after his son's accession his house was swept away, a movement which was to bear immediate fruit had been begun. In B.C. 206 a soldier of fortune, chief of a great feudal force, captured the capital of the Empire and founded the great Chinese dynasty of the Han. The power of the feudal princes north of the Yangtsze was now finally destroyed, and their States formally incorporated in the Empire, the provincial governor being substituted for the feudal prince. Expeditions were despatched south of the Yangtsze, and a great portion of the Chinese Empire of to-day came under the rule of the occupant of the Dragon Throne. A step had been made in advance, but it was not until the T'ang Dynasty (A.D. 618–907) that Southern China with its feudal chiefs was made directly subordinate to the authority of the Imperial Throne. By all this it will have been understood that, beginning as shepherd kings at least five centuries before Christ, the Emperors of China had succeeded in

slowly consolidating their power and destroying feudalism so successfully that long before the eighth century of the Christian era their task was complete, and the Emperor, as Son of Heaven and Vicar of God, governed his people directly through his high officers from Mongolia to the confines of Burma. Occasionally, it is true, civil wars would allow provisional forms of government to be established, and small kingdoms to rise; but such things were very fleeting, and in due course the power of the sovereign was always re-established.

It was soon after the last of the T'ang Dynasty had disappeared that the northern barbarians, after being quiet for some centuries, began anew their series of great raids which, after lasting for centuries and sometimes succeeding in planting dynasties on Chinese soil for lengthy periods, culminated in the firm establishment of the Manchu Tartars in Peking in 1644.

The first task of the Manchus was to subdue completely the eighteen provinces of China; to place the government of Manchuria and Mongolia on a firm military basis; to exact tribute from all neighbouring countries, such as Burma and Indo-China; and to revive all the Chinese methods for carrying on the government of the country they had captured. It was a difficult undertaking, but at length, after thirty years' hard work, coupled with an exhibition of much good sense, the Manchus succeeded in restoring the Chinese machinery which had served its purpose for so many years, although

it had been damaged by internal upheavals and the incursions of savage men like themselves.

This step, so curious for conquerors to take, was no great one for the Manchus, for they themselves had early recognised that knowledge and education were absolutely necessary in order to govern well. And even before Moukden had become the capital of the Manchurian Empire founded by Nurhachu, they had invented a system of writing for their own language and encouraged study by every means within their power. No sooner did they enter Peking than they accepted, practically without modifications, the Chinese system as they found it, and set to work not to destroy, but to strengthen with all the means at their disposal the bonds which bound the Throne to the Chinese people. What were these bonds which, begun in the days of the early Chinese fathers, had been so cunningly fashioned that they had successfully borne the most stupendous test of time recorded in the world's history? It becomes necessary to explain in some detail.

The Chinese system of government is at once patriarchal and democratic. Beginning with the Emperor, it is clear that he simply stands *in loco parentis* to his people and symbolises in his person the highest authority on earth. In the simple heaven-worship of the ruler is found the dominant note of the Chinese system. By divine providence the Emperor is seated on the Throne. Once placed there he is the sire, and his officers are the responsible elders of the provinces, the departments and

the districts, as every father of a household is the ruler of its inmates. In theory, therefore, the two leading principles by which the Chinese administration preserves its power over the people are, the exercising of a strict surveillance, and the imposing of mutual responsibility on all classes. But in practice it is government by equipoise and compromise and nothing else; and a few words dealing with the Central Government and the Provincial administration will make this clear.

Supreme in Peking, and possessing the privilege of daily audiences with the Throne, are two bodies, to be numbered in whose ranks is the dearest privilege of Chinese officialdom. These two bodies are the *Chûn Chi Ch'u* or Grand Council, and the *Nei-ko*, or Grand Secretariat. Which is the more important body? It is hard to say, because the Grand Council has somewhat superseded the Grand Secretariat in active importance, yet to be styled a *Ta Hsûeh shih*, or Grand Secretary, confers the highest distinction attainable by Chinese officials, and possesses a greater literary magnificence than to be a *Chûn Chi ta-ch'en* or member of the Grand Council. Expressed differently, it may be said that the Grand Council, composed of Ministers holding other substantive offices, transacts the real business of the Empire, whilst the Grand Secretariat confines itself to purely internal matters which involve principles which may be dear to *literati* but which are in reality unessential to the welfare of the Empire. In 1900 it was the Grand Council, with its numbers

temporarily greatly swelled by the presence of all the Manchu princes and nobles and by all the important Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the great Peking Boards, which decided the Throne's course of action, whilst the thunder of the Boxers was at its worst and the Court did not know how to act.

Under these two deliberative or advisory bodies are the great government offices through whose hands pass the daily business of the Empire, and whose suggestions, complaints, reports, and plans are handed to the Throne by members of the Grand Council and others at the Daybreak Audiences. There are now seven of these great Government Boards, — the Boards of Civil Office, Revenue, Ceremonies, War, Punishments, Works, and Foreign Affairs. An eighth, the Board of Commerce, whose creation has been recently sanctioned by Imperial Edict, as yet possesses an importance too trivial to be seriously considered.

These seven Boards, therefore, correspond to the Ministries of other countries. But their organisation is peculiar and gives the first evidence of the "equipoise" so essential in Chinese affairs. Each Board has two Presidents, one being Manchu and the other Chinese, and four Vice-Presidents, two of whom are Manchu and two Chinese. Here the principle of equipoise is well illustrated. Any trouble that an energetic man might cause is certain to be promptly checked before the question has got beyond the four walls of the Yamen concerned under the system in force; for by pairing officials

OUTSIDE A YAMEN.

[*Face page* 218, *Vol. I.*

A TARTAR TOWER AT PEKING.

cleverly, the well-known propensities of each are so hedged round that all danger of inconvenient action is removed.

But in addition there is another safeguard. The obnoxious Court of Censors, a species of degenerate Star Chamber, with two Presidents (Manchu and Chinese) directing it, and with a host of minor members scattered over the Empire, has the power of denouncing everybody in the country, and even of directly criticising all the actions of the sovereign. In these degenerate times, unless subsidies are regularly paid to the whole Court of Censors, both metropolitan and provincial officials have an unhappy time of it and are constantly impeached. Almost ironically, the custom has grown up of making Viceroys and Governors ex-officio members of the Censorate; and these latter can repay in full any inconveniences placed on them by over-zealous Peking Board officials, by denouncing those officials directly to the Throne as avaricious and incompetent.

The theory and practice of the Central Government should now be clear. First there is a nominally all-powerful Emperor, the supreme dispenser of earthly things, who in reality is so hedged round by etiquette, custom, precedents, and the bondage of centuries of red tape (which the Manchus were willing to tie about themselves in return for the position they gained) that the occupant of the Dragon Throne is in ordinary times little more than a mere figure-head. Second, there are two councils which are granted audiences at the uncongenial

hours of four and five in the morning. These consult the Throne on questions of the day, and to their documents are affixed slips bearing the marks of the Vermilion Pencil — which, thus adorned, duly become Imperial Edicts or Rescripts. Third, there are the seven Boards each concerned with its own business, which give effect to the Decrees of the Throne, or as much of them as may have been duly understood to be necessary. Fourth stands the Censorate, censoring those acts which are unacceptable because no bribe has been paid, and clogging the machinery in the manner that custom has long ago sanctioned; and finally fifth, sixth, and even seventh and eighth and possibly ninth and tenth, are a host of minor Ministries and Yamens which are too numerous to deserve mention. These regulate such things as the conduct of the Mongolian nomads, the designs to be placed on silk garments woven at the Imperial looms to grace Imperial backs, and the size of the *cortège* which must attend the funeral of Imperial relatives.

In the eighteen provinces it is much the same thing. At the head of provincial administrations stand the Viceroys, who are more properly called Governors-General, and whose office, instituted as late as the sixteenth century during the time of the last Chinese dynasty, the Mings, was originally a semi-military one, designed to check the ambition and power of provincial Governors by pairing them under Viceroys.

Of such Viceroys there are now eight, for al-

though the majority exercise authority over two linked provinces, three provinces, for special reasons, have independent Governors and no Viceroys over them (Shantung, Honan, and Shansi); whilst in one case three provinces are placed under one viceroyalty (that of Nanking), and in two other cases single provinces are governed directly by a Viceroy placed over each (the provinces of Chihli and Szechuan). It is unnecessary and quite out of place to explain how these various customs have grown up; it is enough to say that the Viceroy is simply an extra check on the provincial administration, and he has only been placed where it has been considered absolutely necessary.

Next in rank to the Viceroys come the Governors. There are sixteen of these high officials, each ruling over a province which may contain from ten to forty million inhabitants; the two independent provinces of Chihli and Szechuan having independent Viceroys, not needing the appointment of Governors. Below the Governor stand the Provincial Treasurer, the Provincial Judge, the Salt Comptroller, and the Grain Intendant, who together constitute a committee of provincial administration at every provincial capital. And finally below these men are *Taotai* or Intendants of Circuit, who possess jurisdiction over a number of linked prefectures; and then Prefects, sub-Prefects, department and district magistrates, with hosts of petty officials beneath them, ending only in the *ti-pao* or village headmen. Thus everyone from the highest to the

lowest is linked together in the most minute and careful fashion.

On paper, therefore, the authority of the Throne, duly detailed in countless Dynastic Institutes, Statutes and Rescripts, percolates slowly but surely from the Son of Heaven to the Councils of the Empire; from these to the great Boards; then direct to the Viceroys and Governors, who circulate orders from the provincial capitals to the circuits; while these in turn pass them on to the Prefects, who inform the department and district magistrates; and these again placard their districts, until, finally, gaping crowds of country bumpkins and town loafers listen to someone who is literate and kind enough to read out what has been decreed, and then stand wondering why such orders were issued, since they are all a matter of form. It is all very interesting, but reminds one of the fable of the dog who worried the cat who killed the rat that lived in the house that Jack built — as will presently be shown.

The Throne, proud in the possession of its prerogative and knowing the history of the Empire but too well, although it was pleased to accept this structure erected by Chinese society in its complete isolation during the course of ages, has never made the mistake of forgetting that it, the Throne, is Manchu and not Chinese. When the victorious Manchu armies swept over China, and by completely crushing the Ming adherents cemented the foundations of their own rule, they planted Tartar

garrisons at a number of strategic points throughout the Empire in provinces that had remained recalcitrant; and they also made it clear that although they were quite willing to accept all Chinese customs and systems in force, Manchus were Manchus and Chinese were but Chinamen. Thus all hereditary ranks and titles instituted under previous dynasties were summarily swept away, and the Manchu Princes and nobles, the Yellow-girdled and Red-girdled ones, the Iron-capped Princes and Commandants of the Eight Banners, took their places surrounded by a brilliant court of nobles belonging to this hereditary Imperial nobility. The Manchu Throne formed a new *imperium in imperio*, plain to the eyes of the observant but only dimly understood by the great masses of Chinese people, who, being still governed by their own officials after their own manner, and with the highest civil offices still open to all who could tread the difficult roads leading to literary success, were quite content to believe that the Son of Heaven and his Court belonged to a different world. Thus to the old government by equipoise was added a new feature — an Emperor and a Court party who were forced to maintain their ascendency by the most careful chess-playing.

In the beginning there was, of course, not so much need for adroitness, at least during the reign of four sovereigns; for Shun Chih, K'ang-hai, Yung Cheng, and Ch'ien Lung were not only virile Emperors, but their behests were backed by vigor-

ous Manchu armies, the famous Eight Banners, a portion of whose forces were employed again and again in warfare in Mongolia, in Turkestan, and as far south as Burma. With the abdication of the really great and large-minded Emperor Ch'ien Lung in 1796, the position of the Manchus underwent a serious change for the worse. In the persons of the five sovereigns who have reigned since that time, the Emperors Chia Ch'ing, Tao-kuang, Hsien Feng, Tung Chih, and Kuang Hsu, there are no longer any traces of the old Manchu spirit which knew no fear. As early as the reign of Yung Cheng — the third Manchu to sit on the Dragon Throne — the curious weakening which seems inherent in dynasties ruling over China was noticeable; but the sixty years' reign of Ch'ien Lung was sufficient to rehabilitate the character of the Manchu sovereigns and to postpone the inevitable until the nineteenth century.

Up to this time foreign relations had continued on much the same footing as they had been for countless centuries in the past. The real foreign relations of China had been always those dealing with neighbouring tributary nations such as Korea, the great Mongol principalities, the princedoms of Central Asia, Burma, and Cochin China, and had been in no way connected with the new question, the question of the European States. It is true that the Portuguese had arrived long before in Canton and Macao; and that English and other strange traders following in their wake had sailed to South China in their brigs and schooners; but the manner

in which Koxinga, the semi-piratical hero, had succeeded in expelling the Dutch from Formosa greatly impressed the Imperial imagination, and gave rise to the supposition that this new over-sea trading from Europe was an ephemeral activity susceptible of being crushed, and was therefore hardly worthy of serious consideration.

The weakening of the Manchus continued apace, until, in the first decades of the nineteenth century, only the lustre of the seventeenth-century conquest of China and the supposed qualities and superiority of their Manchu soldiery — things which the curious cast of the Chinaman's mind was content to accept as inevitable and coming from heaven — prevented any upsetting of the Throne.

When the disillusion finally came, it took thirty years (say from 1830 until 1860), and all the various wars and expeditions which went on from the Canton factory days until the burning of the Summer Palace in 1860, to convince the Throne that the old state of affairs had passed away; that the playing with the so-called tributary States could no longer be considered a serious business; and that Europe was assuming a very peculiar and dangerous character. The Court, forced to accept the inevitable, did not do so with much grace, but the efforts of those really great men, the Grand Secretary Wen-hsiang and the Imperial Prince Kung, in whose hands, after 1860, the new-born foreign relations were largely placed, succeeded in masking the real attitude of the Throne and persuading both Chinese and

Europeans that things were not what they had really become long before the opening of Peking. Moreover, at that time there was the terrible Taiping rebellion, which, after blazing fiercely for fifteen years, was not finally extinguished until 1865, and which left much of the country exhausted and gasping, and so confused things that general outlines could not be very clear. Had the Manchus still been great, they might have in these days taken measures which would have spared them the troubles of the last decade.

The years which followed these things were necessarily quiet, since peace at any price was required to heal the wounds. But as year succeeded year, and the memory of bitter days faded away — the flight of the Manchu Court to Jehol to escape the foreign barbarians who were knocking at Peking's gates, the impotent rage at the sack and burning of the magnificent Summer Palace, both of which things were considered as personal insults to the Manchu Throne and not as a chastisement of China and the Chinese Government — the old feelings re-asserted themselves. The common people, taking their cue as they invariably do from the attitude of the Government and officials, who in turn take it from the Court, began the lamentable series of petty riots against foreigners and missionaries which disfigure the records of the past three or four decades. Then came the Tonkin war with the French, ending in disaster, and ten years later the Japanese war for Korea — each giving a

fresh shock to Manchu pride. For after the French war there had been some real efforts to re-arm and re-invigorate, and much buying of Krupp cannon and Mauser and other rifles, accompanied by so-called foreign drill. But Japan with her compact little army and navy had clearly shown that something else was necessary, and that unless the re-invigorating began at the very fountain-head, the Court, it all boded no good for China's future. The vehemence with which that strange combination, the famous triplicate of 1895, pushed its claims for reward for service rendered after the Chino-Japanese war, was responsible for many leases of Chinese territory; and thus, entirely owing to the laxity of the Manchus and their unwillingness to recognise once and for all the necessity for root and branch reform, a new set of factors became all-powerful.

It was while all these things were stinging and smarting, while the old pomp and glory of the Manchu Court were almost entirely departed, and the military hold of the Manchus over the Chinese people was non-existent, that, in 1900, the Boxers, who had been in existence in one form or another for many years, began to push their insane propaganda. Driven West and North from the bellicose province of Shantung, because on the sea-board there were British Weihaiwei and German Kiaochow, and, at the provincial capital, resolute Governor Yuan Shih-kai with 8,000 really good troops who did not believe in Boxer assertions, the revolutionists or rebels pushed into the metropolitan province of Chihli.

What were these men primarily — anti-foreign or anti-Manchu? They were both, and were simply an expression of the irritation, discontent, and poverty which the maladministration of the country had produced, and which had been growing steadily decade after decade, until the old equipoise was in danger of disappearing entirely.

The Manchus, with an instinct developed to the highest degree by the decadence of their rule, understood immediately that something would have to be done quickly, no matter what the consequences entailed. Already, in 1898, the old Empress Dowager had finally shown that in spite of the lopping-off of the Empire, the ignominious defeats, the unanswerable insults, and the manner in which the Court had sunk from its former proud position, she was prepared to die in the last trench of Chinese conservatism sooner than see reform and innovation sweep away the old and disturb the whole balance of things. The famous *coup d'état* of that year, accompanied by the annulling of the pitiable efforts of the Emperor to abolish useless Yamens, had shown that clearly enough; and the nomination of the second son of Prince Tuan, one of the haughtiest of the Manchu nobles, as Ta-A-Ko, or heir-apparent, give an additional proof. The Manchus, being unable or unwilling to reconstruct entirely, sought to arrest the decay by becoming more conservative than the Chinese. Never was there such a policy.

The agents of this Prince Tuan — now personally

interested in the fate of the Throne since his son was the heir — sent numbers of emissaries to the Boxers, and showed the *Luan T'uan yeh*, or Boxer chiefs, sitting in communion with the spirits, that it would pay better to act with the Throne against a common enemy than attempt the impossible — namely, the driving out of the Manchus and the destruction of the European. It was not long, therefore, before the banners of the Boxers displayed the four significant characters *Pao Ching mien yang* — Support the Manchu dynasty, and destroy the foreigner and all his works. For the enmity of the Boxers was really directed against the European, not because he was a European, but because he was an apostle of the new and a destroyer of the old, and therefore a danger to the Chinese social structure. The European was never more than a *Ta Mao-tzu*, or unshaven one of the first class, whilst native converts were placed in the second class of this new breed of men, and all other Chinese, no matter of what class or rank, business or occupation, became equally well known in the brief days of Boxerism under the style of *San Mao-tzu*, or third-class outsiders. The idea was to drive or frighten away all such people, and this plan so exactly suited the Manchus that it is small wonder they threw in their lot with this nationalist party. It appeared that the European, after annoying China acutely for more than half a century, had at length become the necessary pivot on which something resembling the old equipoise might be re-established.

The grand idea of this Boxer movement was an audacious one, for, had it been delayed, as was the original intention, until the autumn of 1900, there can be little doubt that the enormous masses of men available by that time would have swept the European out of existence in North China and necessitated his temporary retreat from every other part of the Empire. The fates were kind, however, and the Court, forced by events to throw in its lot with the Boxers so as to regain its hold on the people, was soon in ignominious flight down the Hsianfu road, and for a year and a half it suffered an agony of mind in exile which is without precedent in the annals of Manchu history. For the Court party well understood that they had in reality both lost their hold over the nation they professed to govern, and over the question of foreign relations, and that they had only recovered something of the first temporarily by placing the second in a still more unsatisfactory position than had ever been the case before. The crisis was an acute and terrible one for them.

At last, after the signature of the final peace protocol in September, 1901, the Chinese plenipotentiaries repeatedly telegraphed that the Court was safe, that it must return without delay or something else might happen; and therefore, full of uncertainty and doubt, and sore alike in body and mind, behold the Manchu Court lumbering back into the capital after an absence of two years and gazing awe-struck at all that had taken place in its absence.

[*Face page* 230, *Vol. I.*

INSIDE THE PALACE.

For the Peace Protocol had dealt no gentle blows to its nobles and princes. Listen to a few clauses which deal with Boxer leaders.

"Tsai Yi, Prince Tuan, and Tsai Lan, Duke Fu-ku, have been condemned at the autumn assizes, and it is further determined that if the Emperor thinks their lives should be spared they shall be banished to Turkestan and there imprisoned for life with no possibility that the punishment shall be ever commuted.

"Tsai Hsûn, Prince Chuang, Yien Nien, President of the Censorship, and Chao Shu-Ch'iao, President of the Board of Punishments, shall be condemned to commit suicide.

"Yû Hsien, Governor of Shansi, Ch'i Hsiu, President of the Board of Ceremonies, Hsû Cheng-yi, formerly Director in the Board of Punishments, shall be condemned to death.

"Degradation after death has been pronounced against Kang Yi, assistant Member of the Grand Secretariat and President of the Board of Civil Office, Hsû Tung, Member of the Grand Secretariat, and Li Ping Heng, formerly Governor-General of Szechuan.

"The General of Kansu, Tung Fu-hsiang, has been deprived of his office until it shall be decided what final punishment shall be pronounced against him." (Perpetual banishment was afterwards ordered.)

In this way three Manchu Imperial Princes were sentenced to death; four of the highest

Manchu officials suffered a like fate; two Chinese Governors had their sentences and degradation confirmed; and all the other supporters of the Manchus, including Tung Fu-hsiang and his Mohammedan Generals from Kansu, were most summarily dealt with.

It was, therefore, a much chastened and fearful Court that installed itself once more within the pink walls of the Forbidden City; a chastened and fearful Court controlled absolutely by the only person of character in the Palace, the old Empress Dowager, who, although seventy years of age, was as vigorous as ever. Time went by slowly and dismally enough, and Edicts streamed out — those blank Edicts which mean nothing, since attention is paid to the spirit which inspires and not the letter which is written. Almost mechanically the people and officials were told to do everything proper, from the unbinding of the women's feet, which the foreigner seems to set much store on, to the establishment of every kind of the "New Learning" school, which would teach young China how to behave to these men from abroad. Everything was to be taught; the temples were to be taken, if necessary, to provide places where this new learning might be inculcated; every district must have its school. So said the Edicts and nobody believed them. It was impossible that the teaching of the excellent Yao and Shun, dating from B.C. 2000, should be so lightly abandoned in favour of the new; and all knew that the Edicts were quite perfunctory instruments.

Thus all 1902 spent itself, and a portion of 1903, and then the Manchurian affair began, and fortunately there was but little time for anything else. It was plain that war was coming on, that uncomfortable thing war, and that until the war was ended everything might be shelved without anyone noticing it.

So in this way the Manchu Court has remained much as it was before, since it is the Empress Dowager — and the Empress Dowager alone — who rules it, and through it the whole of the Empire of China. The old autocrat has grown too old for changes, and she will have none of them; and, as before, her confidant and adviser is a eunuch, the old eunuch Li Lien-Ying, who in addition to all his other vices has now become an inveterate opium-smoker — which is the beginning of the end for those who do not toil the effects off by hard exercise, as do all men of the coolie classes, who remain unharmed by its use.

One thing alone is being done, a thing which, although it smacks of the new, tends to strengthen the old. China is arming slowly, steadily, and mechanically. China is drilling, carefully, far-seeingly, and patiently, with an entirely new spirit. You have but to study the new *Lien Ping Ch'u*, or Council for Army Reform, to understand that. For whereas the Shang-pu, or the new Board of Commerce, is merely an intruder which is not wanted, the Council for Army Reform is rapidly becoming a very great factor, as will presently be shown, and is doing good

if dangerous work. China is arming; that is the only thing that can be clearly discerned in the Government's actions. The Manchus, having drained to the dregs a bitter cup, are preparing against some future day by fashioning themselves new weapons; but what that day is to be, no mortal man knows.

Meanwhile the Empress Dowager has celebrated her seventieth birthday and is very busy over the unhealthy condition of her chief eunuch, who smokes too much opium. A good many of her young Manchu Court ladies are learning new-fangled things, such as knitting; the Shanghai vernacular papers are slipping into the Palace in greater numbers, and are making many enemies by their rude utterances on the present state of affairs; everybody is eating and sleeping much as before the *kêng-tsu nien*, fatal 1900, and the memory is even fading a little, as do all memories. The Boards and provincial authorities are functioning the same as ever; the Chinese Government works in its wooden fashion, whilst the Manchu Court sleeps and the four hundred million till and sow. But just outside the Palace lies that grim Legation quarter, so insolent a fortress. Over the pink walls the Marconi masts can be distinctly seen; and officials travelling up from the provinces begin to see that their lot is irrevocably thrown in with the Manchus.

So the international discord works on in each of the little Peking Legations, all of which try to trip one another up privately, and swear openly that the

sole way of effecting anything is by working internationally, in close concert with one another, and keeping the Chinese down, very far down! Work on in this way, if you please; the day is fast approaching when a reckoning will be called for, and some may find a Ghetto does not tend to make men.

CHAPTER X

THE FOREIGN SERVICES OF CHINA AND THEIR FUTURE

If the Taipings did no other service for the cause of progress and advancement in China, they may be congratulated on one thing — they led directly to the establishment of the Foreign Customs and the Subsidiary Services, which have already played a not inconsiderable part in the recent history of China, and which may play a still greater one in the near future.

It was as early as 1853, or more than half a century ago, that the Taiping rebels captured the native city of Shanghai and held it for many months against the repeated efforts of the Imperialists, as yet unstrengthened by European-led ever victorious armies. The Imperialists, incensed at their constant failures, began to adopt a threatening attitude towards the foreign settlements at Shanghai, then but very small communities, alleging that these European cantonments acted as buffers between the Rebels and the Imperialists, and that the Rebels were even being secretly encouraged. In 1854, the outlook being threatening, a volunteer force was

formed by the European residents, and in conjunction with a handful of sailors from some men-of-war lying in the river they attacked and drove away the Imperialists, who were encamped, to the number of 10,000, in dangerous proximity to the European lines, and were meditating a descent.

The battle of Muddy Flat, as it was named, cost the foreign forces but three men killed and ten wounded, and completed the disorganisation of the native government of Shanghai. The native authorities were now powerless to collect the Customs dues and duties, which for a short time were not paid; and it was in consequence agreed in July, 1854, between the port Taotai and the three Consuls (British, American, and French) that they should be collected under foreign control. This was found to work so much to the advantage of the Chinese Government that the system was extended subsequently, under the Treaties of Tientsien, to all the open ports of China. And in this curious fashion the Foreign Customs, destined to become a power, was born to the Chinese world of strife.

All things considered, it was not exactly an unhappy birth, for the Chinese, ever anxious to welcome anything that does away with doubtful questions, found that the embryo Customs Service, now charged with duty collection and the supervision of what was still an almost purely foreign trade (*i.e.* a trade handled by white men who were breaking into China through the open ports), knew how to deal with European merchantdom, and to settle rapidly the

disputes which had been so frequent in the past and which had led so often to armed collisions. In the beginning, however, it was not considered very honourable or very worthy to serve the native Government in this way, for the successive shocks brought about by the bigotry and intolerance of Chinese officials during the first half of the nineteenth century had made the European merchant of the post-Canton factory days suppose that there was no possible good in the Chinaman, and that he and his kind merited but scant consideration. And in addition, the institution of a clean service with a fixed tariff killed the irregular profits on which the foreign merchant was battening; for no scruples had been felt at taking the Chinaman at his own valuation and bargaining for the duties which had to be paid in each case — thus making legitimate trading almost impossible.

In the usual irregular fashion of the Far East, the new service, born at Shanghai, took some time to become an established fact. The first arrangement was that the three Consuls at Shanghai should each nominate an inspector, and that these would take charge together of the new Department. But soon, as no one excepting the English inspector, Mr. Wade, knew any Chinese, or had any knowledge of the requirements of Chinese trade, the entire organisation was placed in his hands. In 1855, the first inspector was succeeded by Mr. Horatio Lay, who became the first Inspector-General, and the next five years were occupied in extending the new

system to the other open ports of China. The close of the *Arrow* war justified the opening of a Custom House at Canton, and in 1859 a young man, named Mr. Hart, resigned the British Consular Service and the Secretaryship of the Allied Commissioners to become the Canton Deputy-Commissioner.

In 1861, after the Tientsien Treaties had come into force, Mr. Lay, the Inspector-General, was granted leave of absence by the Peking authorities in order that he might visit England to put into operation a scheme which had become a fixed idea with him, and which eventually wrecked his whole career. As early as 1856 he had proposed to the Peking authorities that China should purchase a complete fleet of strongly armed revenue cruisers which, attached to the Customs Service, would be able at once to put down piracy — the curse of the China coasts — and also to act as a training-school for a modern Chinese navy, thus removing all dangers of European complications. In pursuance of his own ideas the Inspector-General bought eight gunboats of different tonnage, several of them being powerful vessels, and engaged, with the consent of the British Government, Captain Sherard Osborne, R.N., and a number of other naval officers to command the fleet. Early in 1863 the fleet arrived in Chinese waters under the command of Captain Osborne, who was given admiral's rank, only to find that both the provincial and central authorities were utterly unprepared to pay either the first cost of these ships or

to find the necessary funds for the portage bills and current expenses. Nor did the British commander agree to the proposal that his fleet should be split up and put under the authority of the provincial authorities. It is unnecessary to dwell further on the details of this now forgotten *cause célèbre*. The Lay-Osborne flotilla lay rotting in Chinese harbours whilst a fierce paper warfare raged between the chief of the Customs, the British Minister at Peking, and the Peking Government; and in the end the British Government had to put its hand in its pocket, send all the officers and crews home, and order the fleet to be sold, thus refunding to the Chinese mandarinate a great portion of the million sterling which the whole undertaking had cost. Mr. Lay was practically dismissed, and young Mr. Hart, only twenty-eight years of age, received the rich appointment of Inspector-General with a salary of £8,000 a year, and a definite agreement from Prince Kung, head of the Tsung-li Yamen, under which the Inspectorate-General was established in Peking and dealt directly with the central Government. The Lay-Osborne affair was the first of a number of attempts which have been made to extend the influence of the Customs Service, the majority of which have been failures.

In the same year the head offices were moved from Shanghai to Peking, and in a very few months a complete re-organisation had taken place. The Customs Service, growing rapidly as successive treaties threw open more and more ports to

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A Peking Street, seen from the Tartar Wall.

foreign trade, soon became an institution whose usefulness could not be over-estimated. Previous to its advent the European merchant had been in the position of an unauthorised interloper, who haggled with the Chinese co-hongs, or guilds, and compounded with them each time any transaction was made. Now the foreign merchant was fully recognised, and so long as he conformed to definite rules and regulations his position was an enviable one. The duties of the Chinese Customs Service were therefore clear; for a number of years it was the official middleman for foreign trade and nothing else. Those were the days of the great staples, when cargoes of tea, silk, sugar, and cotton going out of the country, and cotton manufactures and metals coming in, formed practically the entire trade of China. In the 'seventies, this trade gave freight to about ten million tons of foreign shipping annually and was valued at over £50,000,000 sterling. But silver then stood very high, making the volume of trade, measured in gold terms, unduly big.

Years passed by and the good conditions continued, and by the 'nineties the Chinese Service had reached its high-water mark. Sir Robert Hart, first knighted and then made a baronet as a reward for his good work, could look around him with satisfaction. Foreign Powers vied with one another in conferring on him distinguished orders; and the Chinese Government, remembering that he was not only Inspector-General of Chinese Customs but also Agent-General as well, sought his advice more and

more. But events were in preparation for the imposition of a second burden on the Customs Service. After having been the official middleman for foreign trade for over thirty years, and having seen the number of treaty ports rise from five to thirty-five, fresh complications and wars made it also a species of *Caisse de la dette*. Foreign loans in sterling were contracted, and their service and payment guaranteed, on the security of the Customs receipts. By 1898, as a result of the Japanese war, the Chinese debt thus secured had risen to over fifty millions sterling, and the Chinese Customs receipts no longer affording sufficient margin to guarantee interest, notably on the £16,000,000 4½ per cent. Gold Loan of 1898, a number of Likin collectorates were placed under the nominal supervision of Sir Robert Hart. From the original Shanghai conception of 1854 the Customs Service had already travelled far; but it was destined to go even farther.

In 1897 it had become clear that the small Customs Postal Service, conveying correspondence between treaty port and treaty port, must be extended if it was to justify continued existence. Regulations were drafted, the Postal Service was reorganised, and to-day, eight years since that reorganisation took place, there are one thousand two hundred Chinese post offices belonging to this Service scattered all over China, and including every city of importance. Thus, spreading in many ways, until, besides duty collecting, a foreign debt-service, a

postal service, a lighthouse service, a preventative service and other minor affairs were added to its control, the present Inspectorate-General of Customs oversees to-day almost every point of contact between China and non-China.

And now, having hurriedly treated the external aspect of the question, it is necessary to become more critical and to deal in greater detail with certain important affairs which may be thrust upon the attention of the public before very long.

We have explained the manner in which the Customs Service grew up more or less accidentally, until it had assumed an importance never contemplated in the first instance. Being almost entirely the creation of Sir Robert Hart (since the work of his two predecessors was trivial compared to his own), it is eminently a one-man concern, which, although looked upon internationally as being part of the guarantee of China's good behaviour in commercial and financial matters, is in Chinese eyes something very different. What, then, is the Chinese conception of this Chinese Customs Service and its sub-services, which are all led and officered by Europeans; which derives its existence from the break-down of Chinese machinery; and which is considered an indispensable safeguard for everyone? Is it considered part of the Chinese Civil Service — that is, the native administration of China? Is it hated by the Chinese, or is it merely tolerated? and what part is it popularly supposed to play? These questions must be answered in as few words

as possible — but nevertheless quite fully and exhaustively.

It will perhaps have been understood from what has been already written that the central and the provincial authorities hardly ever look upon either internal and external, or even semi-external, matters in exactly the same light. The Central Government, as the mouthpiece and machine of the Manchu Court, regulates equipoise, insures the payment of provincial contributions, lightens or increases financial loads as is deemed politic, and has but little in common with the provinces. The conception which the Central Chinese Government has of Sir Robert Hart's Imperial Maritime Customs and the kindred services is therefore an extremely curious one. It holds that the arrangement entered into by Prince Kung, President in the 'sixties of the now defunct Tsung-li Yamen, was a necessary internal arrangement and no more — necessary because by it almost every point of contact between Chinese officials and foreign merchants in matters commercial was, after years of strife, removed beyond the jurisdiction of the high provincial authorities, over whom the Peking Government exercised at the best of times not so much supreme authority as the power of checking. And in addition to this, from the Peking point of view, the Customs had proved its usefulness, because a source of revenue amounting finally to nearly £4,000,000 sterling per annum had been made available for war-indemnity purposes without having necessitated the imposition

of fresh taxes on the provinces. Such taxes must have been levied after the Japanese war had not Sir Robert Hart's creation stood ready to receive the new burden.

This point of view is only that of the Peking Government, but it is one which must be clearly grasped in order to understand the whole matter. For the Chinese Customs and the sub-services, brought into existence by one man as the result of his contract with the Central Government, are in no sense considered by the Chinese provincial authorities, high or low, as Chinese services forming part and parcel of the Chinese administrative system. In other words, although sanctioned and always upheld by the Peking Government, Sir Robert Hart's Collectorate is in the eyes of the provinces simply a "farm," such as are often created to find funds in times of necessity in the East. No amount of argument will change the fact that this is the real view of provincial officialdom; and until they look at the whole matter differently but little progress can be made in many directions.

Thus there are two distinct Chinese official conceptions of these foreign services. As if to accentuate the peculiar position occupied even in Peking, Sir Robert Hart's immediate chiefs are not the Presidents of the Board of Revenue — which answers to the Ministry of Finance in other countries — but the Wai-Wu-Pu, or the Chinese Foreign Office; and all returns, reports, despatches, and other communications between the Inspectorate-General and

the various branches of the Chinese Government pass through the Wai-Wu-Pu and through no other channel, and are regarded as foreign affairs or quasi-foreign affairs. And in spite of the fact that time has considerably modified the attitude of the provinces, cases are continually cropping up which reveal the inherent hostility that provincial Governors, and even Viceroys, feel towards Commissioners of Customs — representing, as the Commissioners do, at every treaty port an authority which is beyond the immediate control of the territorial officials, although the fiction exists that they are under that control. Everything possible, of course, has been done to remove the most irritating points of friction, but, although successful up to a certain point, the attempts have never been completely satisfactory. Long ago the principle of banking all receipts was wisely adopted, so as to remove the worst feature of the new system in Chinese eyes — which see squeeze in all money matters. Haikwan, or Customs Banks, were established at the treaty ports, through whose hands all payments and receipts pass, and these banks, placed under the direct control of the Taotai of the port (who, as colleague of the European Commissioner of Customs, directly represents provincial authority in Customs matters), have made it clear that the collectorate is absolutely clean-handed. And again, every document in English dealt with by Custom Houses has its duplicate in Chinese, a course which necessitates a vast amount of clerical work, but which has done much

to remove all cause for Chinese suspicion. Procedure is so clearly laid down, the machinery works so smoothly, and all returns are so trustworthy and complete, that intelligent local officials have ended by declaring that the Foreign Customs might well serve as a model for a complete re-organisation of all Chinese revenue-collecting departments, if such a thing were physically possible.

Thus, after many decades of hard back-breaking work, and a studious attention to complex details necessary to overcome the great bilingual difficulty, Sir Robert Hart has succeeded in erecting a structure which certainly was never dreamt of by the triumvirate of Consuls, meeting together exactly fifty years ago in a bungalow on the muddy foreshore of old Shanghai to consider how best they could secure duty-payment whilst Taipings and Imperialists were in their death struggle. But nevertheless this structure has certain severe and disconcerting limitations, and has become too mouldy.

As has already been written, the high-water mark was reached in the 'nineties — probably the outbreak of the Chino-Japanese war is the best date to set down as the exact year. After over thirty years of quiet, persistent, and unceasing administrative work, Sir Robert Hart was then called upon to exert himself more and more in the field of diplomacy where he has but few compeers, and in which he is perhaps more skilled to-day than in any other. The original idea of his office is contained in the title Inspector-General of Customs, and is self-explanatory. As

the responsible agent of the Chinese Government, the Inspector-General oversees the working of all treaty port Custom Houses, and of the various sub-services which owe their existence to the mother-service. After the Japanese war this was no longer possible in the manner originally contemplated. The Chinese Government, having been saved from the loss of the Liaotung peninsula by the 1895 intervention, found itself with dozens of new questions before it with which it was powerless to cope. Europe, in spite of all the Treaties, was pressing more and more eagerly forward, and nearly every country was demanding some privilege. The Tsung-li Yamen, casting around in some perplexity for ideas, remembered that there was one Sir Robert Hart whose original office had been that of a Chino-European buffer, and it now requested his constant help. From that day the Inspector-General's duties, until then purely administrative, excepting in such special cases as the arrangement of the French Treaty of Peace in 1885, became largely politico-financial, with the whole burden of a constantly growing Customs Service and a new Postal Service still weighing him down.

And the plot centring round the Peking Government rapidly thickened. From the end of the Japanese war to within a few months of the Boxer outbreak it is one constant story of foreign loans, foreign concessions, and foreign demands — the whole Continent of Europe eagerly coming forward and demanding a share of the Chinese pie. Silver was

rapidly falling, too, and increasing the complications, for since Customs receipts were silver receipts, mortgaged to pay foreign gold loans, the interest-service became more and more crushing. Without saying more, it will have been understood that the Directorate of the Chinese Customs Service, dragged into the vortex by the rush of events, soon assumed a different aspect in the eyes of European diplomatists at Peking, who lost no time in communicating their views to their respective Governments. Intrigues, even in the Peking world of intrigues, grew so marked that even the British Government, long somnolent and apparently indifferent to the fate of China, did something: it decided that the time was approaching when a fit successor to Sir Robert Hart would have to be found, and that the Chinese Government must be induced to give utterance to a definite expression of opinion on the subject. Owing to the pressure brought to bear, both points were carried. In the winter of 1897 Sir Robert Bredon, a Commissioner of Chinese Customs, went to Peking as Deputy Inspector-General with the good wishes and the firm support of the British Government; and in a despatch to H.B.M.'s Minister in Peking the Chinese Government definitely laid it down that so long as British trade in China preponderated over that of other European Powers, it was an understood thing that the Inspector-General of Chinese Customs must be an Englishman. This expression of opinion having been obtained before the appointment above recorded, it

was held, and quite rightly held, that all the necessary arrangements had been made. But the whirlwind of events from 1898 to 1900 delayed the retirement of Sir Robert Hart, now grown grey in the service of China.

Meanwhile the growing China trade had lost much of its original character. In the first instance confined mainly to a few great staples of export and import with a small list of sundries, it had, with the death of the tea-trade, undergone considerable change. The sundries had grown apace, as tea slipped from the export list and opium diminished in the import; and the gross value of the trade, although it increased slowly and steadily in silver value, remained almost stationary if measured in gold terms. Already, in 1898, the last Gold Loan previous to the Boxer indemnity had been partly secured on likin or native collectorates (as has already been stated), the receipts of the Customs no longer sufficing; and in addition to this, the European staffs were constantly demanding more and more men, as details and clerical work multiplied and the former simplicity departed. The Postal Service (which was being developed as fast as possible so as to forestall the efforts of foreign Powers, who, by virtue of their extra-territorial rights, were opening their own post offices at many of the ports) became a serious incubus on the back of the Customs Service. The rapidity with which new men were set to work made it impossible for the study of Chinese to be given its proper place; and

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A Peking P'ar-lon, or Decorative Arch.

the additions added to the old structure made the whole Service suffer in consequence.

And whilst internal complications of this nature began to be more and more apparent, other intrigues have been zealously pushed from the outside. The French were pleased to allege that the budding Postal Service, which does not as yet form part of the Universal Postal Union, must come under their control, because, as a result of the British arrangements of 1898, they obtained another agreement from the Chinese Government in which it was promised that, as soon as China entered the Postal Union, the Chinese Postal Service would be placed under a French Postmaster-General and separated from the British Inspectorate-General of Customs. At the present moment Sir Robert Hart's Director of the Postal Department is a Frenchman who has ambitions which even a mastery in diplomacy may soon be unable to check. Already, owing to the great weight which Sir Robert Hart's advice still carries with the Chinese Government, a special vote of nearly £100,000 per annum has been sanctioned, which makes the Chinese Postal Service financially independent of the Customs Service, and is therefore preparing in some ways the ground for a future separation and complications. Hard upon this comes the opening of a number of German and other post offices, which by granting domestic rates between their own branches and those in their own country tend to ruin the Chinese Imperial Post. And the British Government (as if events had not

amply demonstrated how fatuous its policy in the Far East has uniformly been for years past) has lately been struck with a new idea. It is understood that the Foreign Office cherishes a hope that a candidate may be forced into the important office of Inspector-General who will be a creature of Downing Street, and who will no longer attempt to act as honourably towards China as the present Inspector-General, Sir Robert Hart, has always succeeded in doing in spite of many difficulties. This new attitude will serve to complicate still further matters which are already sufficiently complicated. For there is also now an intriguing Germany always seeking to pull out of the fire any chestnuts it can, and opposing anything which makes for the good of China, simply and solely because a strong and well-organised China would spell the death-blow to aspirations which will be presently set forth at length — an intriguing Germany determined to get as much as the French in the Far East.

Under such circumstances, far-away Europe may well hold up its hands in some perplexity and ask what is to be done so that China and foreign commerce may not be further hampered by fresh complications. These questions, which are so difficult to answer when the strength and value of the conflicting elements remain matters of conjecture, are soon dealt with on the spot. There is one course, and only one course, to follow; and unless it is followed there will be a recrudescence of un-

pleasant episodes which, no matter what the results of the great war may be, will inevitably lead to greater complications in the near future — since all understand that in ten years' time it may be too late to act against China.

The history of the Chinese Customs Service and what it has succeeded in already accomplishing for the advancement of the Eastern world are matters of common knowledge. It began in a small way under three inspectors; but circumstances soon proved that only one man was necessary, so long as he was honest and efficient and understood that he was a Chinese Government servant, and not the creature of a fatuous diplomacy. Under one head it has extended year after year with the gradual opening up of China; it numbers to-day in its ranks one thousand Europeans and more than ten thousand Chinese *employés*, and it functions, or will shortly function, at forty-four treaty ports. The coasts of China are lighted by its lighthouses, making the navigation of nearly two thousand miles of coast-line safe to the mariner. The great rivers are buoyed and beaconed through the same agency. The interior is now dotted with postal stations which, if still inefficient, are so largely owing to the cut-throat competition of Consular post offices.

A successor to Sir Robert Hart is needed, and Sir Robert Bredon, the Deputy Inspector-General, has been recognised by the Chinese Government as the man whom they desire. It is only necessary to add that the telegram despatched from Peking

on June 10, 1900, to Canton, warning Li Hung Chang that the Empire would be wrecked if the Legation inmates were massacred, which is believed to have done much to stay the Boxer attacks, was sent at the instance of Sir Robert Bredon; that the well-known Article VIII. of the Anglo-Chinese Treaty of 1902, which is to abolish likin and all inland taxation, was entirely drafted by the same official; and finally that to him is due the drawing up of the only practicable and acceptable scheme for the conservancy of the Shanghai River, a question which Peking diplomacy has wrangled over for years.

But beyond this essential point there is much to be done in the matter of reorganising and extending the present services, for the day is fast approaching when they must be cemented on to the purely Chinese administration of China, and the Chinese made to feel that their best servants are their European *employés*. There is urgent need that before the Consular post offices of those nations who do not desire to see the integrity of China upheld can extend themselves further afield, a scheme should be immediately adopted by the Chinese Postal Service which will abolish these Consular offices and allow China to enter the Postal Union without further delay. And it is likewise imperative that the Chinese Imperial Telegraphs, now purely controlled by an inefficient native administration, should be amalgamated with the Imperial Chinese post offices, and should bring China

into cheaper communication with the outer world by entering into special arrangements with the cable companies or by laying new cables.

But there are other needs. Time has seen a mere extension of the old, and but little provision made for the new. The conditions which held good in China twenty years ago no longer apply. At present the covenanted staff is mainly composed of a class of clerks unfitted by education for any position but the subordinate clerical ones they now occupy. The system in force aims at keeping all in a trembling position of subordinacy, and allows no such latitude or scope for the display of ability as is afforded by the Indian Services. The fact that there are no pensions, but a system of retiring allowances, makes the general position still more unsatisfactory, and accentuates the point of view that these Chinese Services are "farmed" to one high official, Sir Robert Hart. There are likewise no training colleges to fit men for Anglo-Chinese work, and no proper system of examinations to disclose whether officials possess an adequate knowledge of Chinese — a knowledge which should be a *sine quâ non*. In postal work and in assessing and examining work, the outdoor European staffs are practically untrained, and their work is amateurish. In many cases, too, grave doubts are expressed as to the integrity of men charged with examination duty, whilst no effort has been made to train Chinese clerks to responsible work and substitute such men for

European assistants. The numbers of these latter are now unduly inflated, and many perform the simplest clerical duties at salaries often ranging from £500 to £1,000 a year. Neither has any effort been made to limit extra-territorial rights in China, as Japan was able to do before the revision of her treaties. At the treaty ports the Consuls of all nationalities are allowed to heckle the Commissioners of Customs, and, if the latter do not at once give way, the most trivial matters are carried to Peking, to be there dealt with by overbearing Legations able to over-ride the Chinese Government and the spirit of the Treaties by *force majeure*. The work at those China ports whose neutrality has been affected by the war has been likewise highly unsatisfactory; everywhere there are signs that responsibility is avoided at all costs and a policy of effacement adopted. Had Commissioners of Customs been encouraged to maintain China's rights, such cases as those of the "Rischeltni" and "Rastoropny" at Chefoo and the "Mandjour" and "Askold" at Shanghai would never have occurred. An Inspector-General less wrapped up in diplomacy should have succeeded in taking over immediately from Chinese territorial officials the duties of preserving China's neutrality. Instead of this, Commissioners of Customs, port Taotais, and Commanders of Chinese cruisers have made painful exhibition of weakness and indecision on all occasions. This war was the time of all others to cement the Foreign Services more firmly on

to the Chinese territorial administration. The palsy of inaction is everywhere visible, nor has it escaped notice that the Inspector-General has become a Director-General, tied permanently to Peking. In addition to all these things, the social standing of the Foreign Services — more especially in Peking, where the chief administration is central — is not what it should be, and this is responsible for much internal trouble. The level to be aimed at should be the haughty Indian level, and not that of a down-trodden administration such as that of the Congo Free State.

But Sir Robert Hart is now old; he has been fifty-one years in China and has not been in Europe for more than two decades; and he has passed the three-score years and ten. He has had a happy, healthy, and busy life — happy because healthy, healthy because busy, and busy because his hands and mind have always found something to do. He has given his whole life to China wholly and completely from early morning to late night, and he represents that class of Englishmen who have given England the name she possesses abroad. Time and time again he could have conspired in a way which might have swallowed the whole of China into the British Empire had he so desired; instead of this he has allowed the country to swallow him. Could it be said of the men of any other nationality that they would have so faithfully carried out their trust? It would seem as if the fates had made in the Englishman a man who, though often

narrow-minded and insular in his own country, has it in his power to identify himself completely with the interests of foreign countries beyond many seas, and to carry tasks of the most dissimilar nature to a successful conclusion. The British Government has acknowledged Sir Robert Hart's services in some measure, but not as fully as they merit. Whilst his own work ranks with that of the great Proconsuls of the British Empire, as yet he may not claim the same rewards. The time is now ripe for the necessary changes which have been outlined above — for the continuation and amelioration of the work already accomplished. The Inspector-General is anxious to retire, but he will only do so when he knows that the future is fully provided for. Once, when appointed British Minister in Peking in 1885, he resigned that post because he saw that the Chinese Services would be rent asunder by intrigue if he left, and the work of decades thus destroyed. At the present moment the position is not dissimilar. The passage of time can, however, not be disregarded by any man, and it is with the object of proving the force of what has been already written, and of further illustrating certain phases of the Chinese question, that the three documents which follow are now produced and commented on.

CHAPTER XI

THREE DOCUMENTS AND SUNDRY EXPLANATIONS

THE outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war found China, as usual, unprepared to play any part except that of a profoundly interested and somewhat unhappy spectator. The obligations imposed by the Boxer indemnity of 1900 had seriously disturbed the financial equipoise of the Central Government and the provinces by draining away silver to the amount of eighteen million taels a year, with the certain prospect that this load was yearly to increase, as the amortisation of Customs loans set free amounts previously employed to pay the bond-holders of the Japanese war loans, and allowed these sums to be poured into the lap of offended Europe instead of returning to China's coffers. The prohibitory clause which had absolutely forbidden the importation of arms from abroad for a period of two years after the signature of the final peace protocol, had only terminated in September, 1903; and although Continental dealers had been rushing in Mausers, Mannlichers, Krupp cannon, and millions of rounds of ammunition during the half-year of grace before

the present conflict, this could not be sufficient to place China in the position she desired to occupy in the settlement of affairs taking place within the limits of her own territory. The usual dull course was followed: all who from their rank and position were esteemed worthy of confidence were once again asked to memorialise the Throne as exhaustively as was in their power, and to point out for the last time the narrow and necessary road which China would have to follow.

It was, of course, understood from the very beginning that Sir Robert Hart's suggestions would be listened to and pondered over very earnestly. Engrossed for at least a decade in the study of politico-financial problems, and invested since the Court's return with the high-sounding title of Junior Guardian of the Heir Apparent, he commanded the personal attention of the Throne, by which is now understood the all-powerful Empress Dowager. It was with no little curiosity, therefore, that the publication of his remedial suggestions was awaited. China was apparently mortgaged up to the hilt; everything that could be said had already been said many times over, and therefore, without seriously upsetting the established order of things, nothing much could be done. Two months after the declaration of war these suggestions were made public through the usual leaking of Peking Yamens. It transpired that the inevitable had happened and that the sacred land-tax — sacred because its inviolability and its fatness had been the sheet-anchor of provincial

officialdom for ages past — was openly fixed upon as the one and only means, by employing which China could not only rehabilitate herself but grow more powerful and commanding than she had ever been before. In an appendix will be found the whole of this important document which a twelvemonth ago threw the provinces into some consternation; and in giving a complete translation of the Chinese text the original wording is followed as closely as possible, so that the vague and wooden manner of utterance, still adhered to in China in this age of steel, may be well understood, and the nature of the gulfs realised, which have to be bridged. In this place it suffices to summarise the document which, remarkable in itself, provoked a still more interesting reply.

Sir Robert Hart began by setting forth the urgent need for increasing the power of China, and, to that end, for increasing the revenue. This he stated at 80 odd million taels per annum derived from Customs, salt, land and poll taxes. Concentrating then on the land-tax, he estimated that China contained eight thousand million mow of land, and that for every ten mow one tael of taxes might be expected. Deducting a half of the area as untaxable, there remained an area capable of yielding four hundred million taels. A second part of the memorandum suggested a machinery for re-organising the land-tax, in order to raise this revenue. This machinery should be at first set in action in some suitable district of a selected province, where expectant officials could be trained in its

working; these would, at the end of six months, go to start the machinery elsewhere and to train others; so that, he computed, by the end of three years the whole Empire would be brought under the new system. A third part of the memorandum suggested a programme for expending the money thus raised on the formation of an adequate and self-providing army and navy, and on the establishment of a proper system of payment for officials. A fourth section emphasised the critical importance of being ready against what should come at the close of the Russo-Japanese war, and deprecated opposition to the scheme proposed simply because it was an innovation.

This lengthy document has not been ignored by students of the Far Eastern problem. It has, on the contrary, attracted considerable attention; but curiously enough, foreign critics have laid stress not upon the financial side — *i.e.* the complete reform advocated in the land-tax, or upon the fact that Sir Robert Hart offered himself to the Manchus as paymaster of the Empire, but rather upon the measures which would result from such a reform if the suggestions made were adopted *in toto*. In other words, the question of the setting in order of the Chinese house, and the commercial benefits which would immediately accrue to everyone on such a course being adopted, are completely overshadowed and even nullified by the grim spectre of an armed, fortified, and determined China. Putting it brutally, it may be said that, out of Asia,

the general attitude is expressed something as follows: — "It is best to let well alone, and allow China to go along lumberingly and inefficiently as in the past, sooner than see her rise up and gird up her loins, and be fully prepared to step into the arena and challenge Europe's hardly-won rights."

By men possessed with these fears, that sharp-cutting weapon, ridicule, has been brought into play, and it has been caustically pointed out in a number of quarters that not even a million and a half well-armed and well-drilled Chinese troops, protected by a first line of defence consisting of thirty Chinese battleships, thirty powerful cruisers, and one hundred and eighty torpedo craft would avail the Empire anything, so long as Chinese leaders remain what history has always shown them to be when in conflict with Europe; that all this piling up of millions of men and this stocking of vast arsenals will mean nothing, absolutely nothing, so long as the *moral* is not there. But it is well for Europe to remember how sceptical it was in the main about Japan before the great war, and to bear well in mind that the East is always inscrutable to those who live permanently in the West.

But other critics have gone farther. They see in Sir Robert Hart's Memorandum the complete Boxer unmasked, and state that the suggestions made are only the logical outcome of convictions to be found in the "Sinim" Essays. In these Essays the opinion was firmly expressed that the Chinese

people had at last found a battle-cry, around which all would rally when they heard the grim shouting; that after a lethargy of centuries foreign aggression and oppression had aroused the Chinese people and the assimilated Manchus to a sense of the common fate which would overtake all unless they sank their inter-provincial and inter-national differences and banded together; and that Boxerism was but a manifestation of nationalism. The Essays described the wooden shaft of the spear; the Memorandum showed temptingly to the Chinese Government the huge steel head which could be so easily fitted on; and thus the ideas were not only connected but the second set were the logical outcome of the first.

This European criticism is interesting as showing how the changes which have taken place in Chinese sentiment, aspirations, and ideas since the settlement of the Boxer business — to be brief, the great strengthening of the national idea, which is a current daily increasing — have almost entirely escaped attention in Europe; but it is beside the mark for other reasons. With or without the land-tax reform, China is arming, and intends to continue arming, until she is fully prepared for evil days. The whole essence of this Memorandum of Sir Robert Hart's is contained in its financial suggestions; and seeing that some form of financial reconstruction must be undertaken in China during the next few years, it is well to ask whether the suggested re-organisation of the land-tax is feasible or not; whether the methods

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proposed are sane and workable; and finally whether the gross estimate of four hundred million taels, or some £55,000,000 sterling per annum, is a possible or merely an imaginary total. The answer to all these questions is not satisfactory; for a little examination brings to light a great number of discrepancies which would make the entire recasting of the reform scheme necessary before it was even possible, not to say workable. And the fact that the Inspector-General weakens his case by acknowledging that many modifications may be necessary is also a bad sign.

Beginning with the metropolitan province of Chihli, which, being the most firmly controlled and directly under the eyes of the Manchu Throne, would be the most suitable province in which to inaugurate any new scheme, a first great obstacle is immediately encountered. Great tracts of land, enormous in extent and very often numbering countless villages, belong to the Manchu nobility and the Bannerman Corps, whose title is so indisputable that it would be quite impossible for the Throne, with its much weakened prerogative, to attempt to tamper with privileges acquired two and a half centuries ago. This land is practically tax-free, and is not held under the ordinary Chinese title-deed or *hungch'i*, but by Imperial Letters Patent, which are great black-looking documents given to the holders by the Manchu conquerors ages ago, and as inalienable, whilst the present dynasty continues on the Throne, as the feudal baronies of William the

Conqueror were in England after the Norman Conquest. The land being tax-free is leased to village communities of Chinese agriculturists, who discharge their obligations by payment both in kind and in money. How much of Chihli province is thus held it is impossible to say, but the area of arable land thus owned must be a very enormous one and comprise much of the desirable country. And the territorial officials in this province, instead of welcoming the right to tax the land under the new scheme, would oppose it just as bitterly as the Manchu proprietors, since they receive privately certain "benefits" at the present moment which, under the new method, would be impossible. And although it is mainly in Chihli and Manchuria that Manchus and the other Bannermen have their fiefs, in many other parts of China immense tracts of land have been reserved for them, all of which is nominally tax-free and its area very indeterminate. For in the Imperial Letters under which such land was granted there is only a record made of the number of villages given and not of the acreage; and thus it has not been hard in the many years which have elapsed to add considerably to such holdings.

But this question of Manchu lands is perhaps the smallest objection; fallow land is the greatest. Rough estimates have been made from time to time in a number of parts of China dealing with the matter, province by province; and it may be said that the taxable area varies from one-half down to as low as one-fifteenth. Then, again, "settlements" which

have been made from time to time are not so easily set aside as the Memorandum above quoted would imply, for these settlements are as definite, or are understood by the people to be as definite, as law could make them, and are much like those found in India. The greater part of Bengal, about one-fourth of Madras, and many districts of the North-Western Provinces of India had their "settlements" fixed permanently as far back as one hundred years ago, and no one would dare to change them to-day. And again, in China it is quite absurd to suppose that all provinces should pay the same rate of two hundred cash per mow, which would be exceptionally low in many cases and exceptionally high in many others. In silk and cotton provinces, which also possess an abundance of rice, like Kiangsu and Chekiang, the rate goes as high as eight hundred and nine hundred cash per mow; but these provinces are the exception, and being rich have been made to pay very heavily during all times for their fertility; whilst the poorer provinces, with huge family-clans tied to the soil as in Russia, and over-burdening it with their inexhaustible demands, are the rule, and any land-tax, no matter how light, is often the last straw which breaks the camel's back and produces armed revolt.

Then, again, the rebellions and revolutions which disfigure the history of the nineteenth century in China have left marks which until recently were considered almost ineffaceable — ineffaceable until new industries and enterprises

infuse new blood and life and lighten the terrible load all productive land bears in China. In other words, much of the population must first be thrown from the cultivation of the soil into factories and workshops to relieve the pressure on the rural districts, and only then can loads be increased. The Southern Mohammedan rebellion devastated all Yunnan and parts of Kueichou provinces only three decades ago; the Taipings completely ruined Kiangsi province; the North-Western rebellions in turbulent parts of China, such as Mohammedan Kansu and Shensi, make entire populations disappear; and floods and famines, allowed to follow their own dire course, make tax-collecting impossible for periods varying from twelve to thirty-six months in large areas.

Under these circumstances, which by no means cover the entire ground, the contention that half the total acreage of China Proper is taxable at an uniform rate of two hundred cash a mow, and that such taxation should yield four hundred million taels, or, say, £55,000,000 sterling, is not only optimistic but absurd. No such sum could ever be produced. And to clinch the argument, it is only necessary to say that the entire estimated revenue from land, payable in silver and grain after the biblical manner, is to-day but thirty-two million taels, or say four and a half millions sterling. The difference between these two sums is so startling that it is impossible to believe, without even considering the few details which have already been considered,

that a sum equivalent to even half or quarter the difference finds its way into the pockets of Chinese officials. For if such were the case every Viceroy and Governor might put a million or two into his pocket yearly; all Taotais and other high territorial officials could estimate their pickings by the hundred thousand taels; smaller officials might squeeze with ease from ten to fifty thousand annually; and finally yamen-runners, the detested birds of prey battening on every country side, would have their hundred taels a month from every man — even then, leaving many millions over to disappear in some mysterious way which cannot be fathomed.

What, then, is the explanation of this complicated question? It is necessary to turn to another Memorandum which throws much light on hidden things, and quote almost in full what Viceroy Chang Chih-tung, looked upon by some as the great hope of China, answered in reply to a command conveyed by Imperial Rescript instructing Viceroys and Governors to report directly to the Throne on the proposed reform. His Memorial is in the highest degree interesting and establishes clearly the relationship of the provinces to the Central Government and the Throne to-day. After a formal recapitulation of Sir Robert Hart's proposals, the Viceroy opens the attack in the directest way.

The Inspector-General states the possible revenue at much too high a figure. It could not be raised and would excite insurrections.

I will now (says the Viceroy) state the faults and advan-

tages of the proposals before your Majesties. Without counting Turkestan, Mongolia and Manchuria, China is stated to be 4,000 li wide and 4,000 li deep. Its area would therefore be 16,000,000 square li. Each li is assumed to contain 500 mow, and 16,000,000 multiplied by 500 equals 8,000,000,000 mow. If each mow of this land pays two hundred cash the total revenue will be Taels 800,000,000. But it is supposed that the revenue will amount to half of this or Taels 400,000,000. If this be true, the road to riches would indeed be a short one. Every Viceroy and Governor would with joy adopt the suggestions. At the risk of no matter how much trouble it might cause each one of them, and no matter how much dissatisfaction it might awaken, all would proceed at once to relieve the anxiety of the Sovereigns and to open the way to wealth and comfort to all the people.

But the Inspector-General of Customs has looked at the old maps of China and calculated its area in this way. His estimate is based on emptiness. He supposes the great and small rivers and lakes, the cities, towns and villages, the mountains and the barren wastes to be all a part of the area capable of cultivation. Dividing 8,000,000,000 mow by two, he arrives at the conclusion that China can yield a revenue from land and grain taxes of Taels 400,000,000. He omits to think that in China most of the area is mountainous or is covered with rivers and lakes; cultivated plains amount to much less than half. In the Hu Pu Tse-li of 1874 the total number of mow is given at 742,000,000 mow. This is less than one-tenth of the area stated by Sir Robert Hart. If there has been collusion and concealment, the true area cannot be much above this amount. The cultivated area has been measured during the successive reigns of the Emperors. How can there be any great difference between the area of China ages ago and the area now under the Manchu Sovereigns? A difference amounting to ten times as much of the whole is impossible. It may be said that the mow differs, and

that the land-tax varies in this region, and that, of course, some localities are fertile and others are barren; this leads to difference in land-tax and grain-tax. Taxes cannot be levied according to land measurement, but according to the quality of the soil. To levy 200 cash on every mow is absurd. The Board of Revenue has lately ordered the Empire to pay yearly in silver Taels 31,000,000; if all the land be taxed evenly without reference to quality, each mow will only be liable for less than five candareens of silver. The Inspector-General supposes each mow to be liable for one mace; this is adding at one stroke to the taxation so much that it is double what it was. This the people could not bear.

Some persons may say that 200 cash a mow is not much to pay, but in the South Eastern Provinces where land is very productive the tax is more than 200 cash a mow. But it is only in some prefectures that this is true. In North Eastern China there is not a little waste land. The value of the land is very small; often a family of eight cannot subsist on several tens of mow occupied by them or on a farm of more than 100 mow. The produce does not in some years suffice for their food and clothing. To obtain from them ten, twenty and thirty strings of cash each year as land-tax is often impossible. It is plain, then, that two hundred cash a mow is far too large an amount to be thought of as an estimate of land-tax.

Besides, the mow varies in area. In some localities it is 240 kung; in others it is 360 kung; in some places it is 720 kung. These values have been transmitted from former times. It is impracticable to obtain uniformity in returns from various provinces. Another cause of diversity is concealment of the true areas of farms. Rich proprietors hector and bribe, and the amount of their dues is settled by a compromise. Poor proprietors occupy mountain-land or land bordering on streams; the land measurer may require the same tax as from land better

situated. The occupiers become angry; sometimes they strike the officers and destroy the tax office. The estimated tax cannot then be collected. Even if the magistrates and their assistants are fair-minded they have much to do. The details are endless even in one district city with its area. Days pass and the measurement can only be completed in one or two years. The magistrates, tax-collectors, village constables, and persons in their employ as workmen would be subjected to very great trouble if a new measurement (such as Sir Robert Hart proposes) were resolved on for the Empire. It is not conceivable that as much as 10,000 mow in addition would be found in the taxable land in the area of every hsien city. But supposing that there were an addition of taxable land in the area of every district city, the increase would not amount to a thousand taels of silver. The profit would be small, and the expense and labour involved would be very great. The whole population would be excited. Each man would be subjected to much trouble. The anxiety and grief occasioned would be painful beyond description. The Government has at present more than enough of difficulty on hand. It is highly important to quiet the minds of the people. The indemnity fixed by treaty in 1901 requires annually Taels 18,000,000 to be paid to foreign countries. Each province is spending money on new improvements (such as railways, colleges, etc.). Innumerable small expenditures take away the means of subsistence from the poor of every locality. Infamous persons tempt the people to wrong-doing, and they are everywhere. False stories are invented to lead people astray. Foolish persons believe them and hurry after some unprincipled schemer. Should any new cause of disturbance be added just now to stir men's minds and trouble the authorities?

During 300 years our dynasty has ruled on the principle of light taxation and few imposts. In the tenth year of Kanghi (A.D. 1711), an Edict said the land-tax should

never be increased. When great armies were required and great works were planned, when even the Treasury was empty, the land-tax was not increased. The system of kiuen shu contributions and that of likin collections were added, but the land-tax has not been increased and has often been remitted. This is because farmers, more than any other class, labour hard for small returns. Miserably poor they are, doubtless.

The Inspector-General of Customs proposes that the Customs duties be abolished and the salt-tax also. The people should be allowed to trade, but is this for the benefit of the people or is it to extend the profit of the proprietary? The Taels 400,000,000 which the State requires each year is all to be taken from the farmer. The trader and artisan are to contribute nothing. Can any scheme be more unjust than this of Sir Robert Hart's? The result could only be extremely disastrous. What can be his meaning in framing such a proposition?

My thoughts run in this direction. Since the Customs were placed in foreign hands, half of the power of controlling the wealth of China has been in foreign hands too. In this Memorandum of Sir Robert Hart I see that he wishes to have the control of the land-tax also. Should he obtain it as the result of his cleverly expressed and ably written Memorandum, he will have too much power over China's finance. I have been reading over several times the Edicts of the Empress-Dowager and of the Emperor. They say much of the misery of the people and the merciless exactions of the magistrates and the tax-collectors. All the people are deeply affected by these Edicts. They weep as they read them. I feel certain that the Sovereigns will not be swayed by the persuasive words of this Memorandum. I have been in the provinces for many years. I have seen much of land measuring and the levy of taxes on newly cultivated land. There are certainly not 4,000 million mow of land the produce of which would bear a tax of 200 cash a mow. Sir Robert Hart asks that he

may have the control of the land and grain taxes. His statements are far wrong and ought not to be regarded as in any degree practicable. I cannot be a party to support any such design. The Sovereigns have commanded us each to state his view. The increase of the revenue for the support of the army and drilling new troops is a pressing need at the present time. It is the duty of all the Governors and Viceroys to adopt methods suited to the conditions of each province for a larger collection of money in so far as it can be obtained without laying new taxes on the already over-burdened people. The amount must not be oppressive nor the procedure plainly worn out and one-sided. Certainly the method should not be by an enormous addition to the land-tax to the neglect of other sources of revenue. Let there be cutting down here and there. Let each region be made to produce that which it is adapted for. Let all unite their strength to raise what is required. Although an incredibly great addition to the revenue is not to be thought of, yet little by little, an ounce here, a catty there, inch by inch and foot by foot, a substantial result may be fairly expected.

In every province some prefecture or district may have a new piece of land brought under cultivation, land without an owner, quietly ploughed and sown without the knowledge of the magistrate. For many years such land has paid no taxes. Proof can be had and the amount of additional revenue may very well be considerable. All the Viceroys and Governors should diligently and increasingly inquire and proceed to measure all such land very carefully, so that a sum of money, it may be more or it may be less, may be gained by the national Treasury.

I beg your Majesties to give the order to have the actual state of each province carefully investigated. China is very weak at present. Dangers surround the Fatherland. There should be great caution. Action should be thorough and efficient in every particular. We must remember the work of those able generals and statesmen who put down

the Taiping rebellion. In planting their encampments and fighting their battles they showed wisdom and foreseeing prudence. They succeeded because they deserved to succeed.

So in regard to success in finance. I beg your Majesties not to listen to clever novelties couched in language pleasing to the ear. Unwise finance leads to insurrections. There are many rebellions chronicled in history which were caused by unwise finance. Rebellions occasioned by extortionate exactions are most easily produced in times of poverty. The deceivers of the people work mischief most readily when the Government is weak.

What I fear is that Sir Robert Hart's plans will lead foreigners to look with greedy eyes on our supposed wealth. They will quickly form cunning plans to obtain control over our sources of revenue. Our system of government will be thrown into confusion by many ambitious foreign schemers. It is not only Hart that is to be feared.

I beg your Majesties to weigh matters carefully and consider the consequences when propositions of a revolutionary character are confidently made. The Memorandum of Hart is empty and wanting in truthful statement. As commanded, I have consulted with my fellow-Viceroys. Viceroy Yuan Shih-kai telegraphs that he has sent up his memorial. He asks me to do the same. This with tears of sincerity I now do.

This document which ends so tearfully is one of the most informing and striking published in China for a number of years. It is in many respects more remarkable than Sir Robert Hart's, for it is not only illuminating but it is refreshing. It has an Eastern atmosphere about it, and is couched in such speaking biblical language that the distressed provinces loom up large and very real before one. Sometimes the

aged, grey-bearded Viceroy is exact; sometimes he speaks eloquently of all things, and so well does he modulate his tones that one might well inquire, by the beard of Mohammed, whether this is not the bulbul singing to the rose! Many points are made, and it is clearly shown that the provinces have given all they mean to give directly for some time to come, and that if the screw is put on there will be danger. This is one of the best points in the document.

The whole Memorial is too long to be analysed in great detail, but certain things may be picked out. The Inspector-General is accused of looking at old maps — probably by this is meant the maps founded on the wonderful surveys undertaken at the instance of the first Manchu Emperors by the early Jesuits, which awakened dread in the hearts of territorial officials two centuries ago, and which ever since have been denounced as untrustworthy. The Inspector-General is further told that his estimate is based on emptiness, and that he supposes that rivers, lakes, cities, towns and villages and even barren spaces (a fine sarcasm) are all susceptible of cultivation. And then Viceroy Chang Chih-tung vouchsafes the information that in the *Hu Pu Tseli*, or the registers of the Board of Revenue, the total number of mow under cultivation was returned as late as 1874 at 742,000,000 mow. This is one of the most remarkable statements in the whole document, and one which the Board of Revenue has never been willing to make itself; for it means that

but one-eleventh of the entire area of China is included in the land-tax assessment, and that these 742 millions only produce thirty-two million taels or one tael for every twenty-five mow of land. Seeing that in mountainous Japan over one-third of the area is returned in the official reports as taxed, and that the Japanese land-tax, which is not necessarily levied on arable ground, produces some £5,000,000 sterling from an area, reduced to Chinese measure, which amounts to about 200 million mow, it is more than strange that the Chinese land-tax which is levied on an area almost four times as great as that in Japan produces a revenue perceptibly smaller.

It is thus clear that if Sir Robert Hart is unduly optimistic, Chang Chih-tung as an apologist is hardly less to be censured. But not only does Chang Chih-tung repudiate everything said in the proposals which he was called upon to criticise, but he clinches his arguments after the Chinese fashion by running all down the gamut of indignation, and giving a number of shrewd blows which were not lost on the Central Government or the Court. He points out that it is quite impossible that such a large difference as nine-tenths could exist between the real area and the present assessment; that the difference in mow measurements, although great, do not account for these things; and that productiveness of the land varies as much as the actual extent of the mow unit. But all these arguments are merely prefatory — the real note is struck when, also after the manner of Chinese officialdom at bay,

Chang Chih-tung in a somewhat polite and veiled fashion, but still deliberately, defies the Throne. "Unwise finance leads to insurrections," he says, calmly adding arguments which are convincing to Chinese minds, saturated as they are with a history teeming with rebellions and complots, and fearing to inaugurate the new simply because experience has taught that each step forward necessitates others, and that to stand mulishly still for a long time before acting is the best policy. Nor can the ugly hint about the Taiping rebellion be passed by; the Throne is reminded that the provinces crushed that rebellion for the Manchus when they were powerless to do anything themselves; that the future is in any case likely to be as troubled as then; and that only the loyal support of the provincial authorities will count for anything. Everywhere in the document is the system of equipoise and compromise clear. Finally, the fact that Sir Robert Hart directly proposes to take control of all this revenue, thus having all the finances of the Empire in his hands, is made enough of for everybody to understand what is behind. The provinces have been satisfied with the Manchu rule because everything has been left as before. If this policy is reversed, then, beware!

Before closing this discussion it is as well to say that the most careful investigation shows that the area under cultivation in China is approximately two thousand million mow, a quarter of Sir Robert Hart's estimate, and that if the taxes which are

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now in force were all collected and handed over to the Central Government the amount would be some ninety-four million taels.

But what did the Court do after these outspoken Memorials? Did it attempt to find the just mean between two unbusiness-like extremes by close and careful investigation? Not at all. The Court was a little troubled and a little more unhappy than ever at these fresh signs of the times, and then after a short lull the ordinary business of the Empire was taken up and the remedial suggestions, which had been such a nine days' wonder, were soon buried in oblivion. And shortly after these things had occurred two Decrees were issued which together form the last document necessary to complete the illustration of the theory and practice of the Chinese system.

The Decrees run: —

Imperial Decrees

(A) The other day Hsi Lin, Keeper of the Seals and Censor, denounced the incapability of the officials of Honan province, where the preservation of the peace and the enforcement of law and order are exceedingly lax, as exemplified by the wide-spread disorders raised by members of the Hushu Hui secret society in that province. We therefore sent instructions to Yuan Shih-k'ai to investigate the charges and report at once to us (Honan is Viceroy Yuan Shih-k'ai's native province. — Translator). Yuan Shih-k'ai's report is now before us, in which he states that the principal leaders of the said Hushu Hui have all been captured by the Government troops, while their followers have since been scattered. The officials of the province, generally, cannot be excused, however, from the charge of

lack of energy and vigilance, and inability to capture the robbers concerned in plundering the country-side. With reference to the charges against Lang Kuei-lin, Major-General of the Hopei Military Circuit, the memorialist finds that he has not been guilty of the charge of avarice and disregard of his good reputation, but the said Major-General should not have used the soldiers under him to serve as an escort to bring his family to Honan, when they ought to have been occupied in patrolling the country-side and acting as a check against brigands. For this misuse of his men we hereby command that the said Major-General be removed from his post. As to the conduct of Lu Heng-hsiang, district magistrate of Hsinhsianghsien, in taking to himself as concubine the daughter of the petition writer of his yamen, and his neglect to keep a watch upon the conduct of his underlings whose rapacity and eagerness to obtain bribes, etc., have been a by-word throughout the country round about, we hereby command the said magistrate to be cashiered forthwith as a warning to others. We further desire to impress upon Chen Kuei-lung, the Governor of Honan province, the importance of keeping a strict watch on the good government of his province and to use his best efforts in the matter of preserving peace and good order therein. Let the Board concerned take note.

(B) Since the beginning of the winter months until the present we have had very little snow, in consequence of which the farmers are waiting anxiously for a good snow fall. We sympathise deeply with the troubles of our poor farmers in this connection, and we therefore think it incumbent upon us to proceed on the 22nd instant to the Takao temple to pray for snow and thus help our subjects. We further command Prince P'u Wei to sacrifice on our behalf on the same day at the Shihying temple; Prince Tsai Hsun to sacrifice at the Ch'unghsien temple; Prince Tsai T'ao at the Jen temple; and Prince P'u Lun at the Ningho temple. Let all obey.

Could one ask for anything more than these Decrees? The Throne, tired of being worried by Memorials about this everlasting land-tax, first vents its spite on Honan officialdom. Lang Kuei-lin, a Major-General of a military circuit belonging to the old *régime*, has been using his provincial army or portions thereof to bring his family into Honan, and for this excessive attention he is removed from his post. I think it was my fate actually to witness something of this. First came the great country carts, piled high with Mrs. General Lang's effects and full of fat serving women; then the mule litters swinging to and fro to the tune of jangling bells and bearing the more precious members of the family, which are the wives and concubines: behind these, donkeys and ponies on which were mounted many servants and retainers; and then, all along the road, with a vast tail straggling far away behind until it was lost in the distance, came a number of the valiant provincial army of Honan in big flapping Hupeh hats, protecting them from the sun, and with the fire-pieces serving to carry bundles innumerable, meandering along and coarsely jesting with the women. For such a natural crime as this is the poor provincial General of the old *régime* to be removed from his post! But the removal will happily take time, perhaps a year, perhaps two years — and by then funds will have been accumulated which will enable all to protest that it was a mistake and that even if the General did err he has been already sufficiently punished.

But the conduct of the district magistrate of Hsinhsianghsien in taking unto himself the daughter of the petition-writer of his Yamen is evidently viewed with greater displeasure by the august Throne, since the offender is summarily cashiered as a warning to others. Why, it may well be asked, cannot a Chinese official take as concubine the daughter of his Yamen petition-writer, since in China all women willingly become concubines? Is it immoral? No, but it disturbs equipoise and must be stopped. For the petition-writer is an important person in a country Yamen. He sits near the main gate — is as likely as not housed in the Yamen itself — and to him come all and sundry with the material facts of their cases, talking so loudly and disputing so much that any experienced petition-writer can pick out the man who has the most money in very few minutes. The district magistrate, probably when he was strolling forth in the evening to get the cool breezes which follow the stifling heat of the summer days, saw the comely daughter of his petition-writer, and forthwith arranged that she should be added to his harem, making perhaps the fourth or fifth beloved, since there is nothing unlawful or unseemly in having up to eight little-footed and much-painted women, who fight amongst themselves eternally, and yet are too attractive to the Celestial mind to be got on without. And if the daughter of the petition-writer is comely, it is quite certain that she, duly instructed by her father, will soon dominate the whole Yamen; for

women in China rule as closely as they do in other countries, in spite of certain honoured beliefs that they are oppressed and down-trodden. Anyone who has been in country Yamens knows this. And with the equipoise of the country Yamen gone there would be certain to be trouble; therefore let the magistrate go first.

Finally, in the second Edict the poor farmers are thought of. The weather having been threatening for days and snow quite certain, prayers were ordered to be said by the Imperial Princes begging for snow. Within forty-eight hours the north wind brought it down from Mongolia and Manchuria; and the Throne, assured that all were satisfied, slept once again in peace. Such things as concerned equipoise had been duly adjusted; nothing remained to be done.

The picture is therefore complete — theory and practice have been illustrated and explained. And thus, whilst the war rolls on just beyond the limits of the Great Wall, the Throne and high Chinese authorities make their calculations and keep the old machinery slowly moving. Soon they will take up the discussion of these things again. For the time being, all has been said that is necessary, for the Chinese question is a tiresome and never ending one.

CHAPTER XII

TIENTSIEN, THE CHIHLI VICEROY AND THE PRESENT OUTLOOK

THE afternoon train is waiting for you beyond the Water Gate, through which the first Sikhs entered in 1900; a small crowd of Europeans and Chinese is on the platform; cigarettes and native newspapers are now hawked just as they are in other countries; and the crowd, were you to strip the surroundings, would seem exactly as other crowds. The engine shrieks and away you dart, this time due east under the Tartar wall; then due south, skirting the inside of the Chinese city wall, and finally out through a hole in the wall into the open country. You have thus had a longish run of four or five miles within city walls; but you have interfered with no city occupations, for the Chinese city of Peking is filled with vast open spaces near the enclosing walls, spaces that are sometimes patched with cabbages and vegetables, and sometimes covered with *débris*, but all impressing you, as the train makes its riotous passage, with the fact that the Golden Age

has long passed here, and that the nation is now living on a much exhausted capital.

It is somewhat curious though, too, these railways which run so smoothly and so rapidly, the one from the Yangtsze Valley and Central China, the other from the Pechili seas right up to within a few hundred yards of the Palace Gates. For to Chinese eyes and minds it is all part of one system — the system and state of affairs which culminates in a great armed Legation square leaning up against the pink walls of the Forbidden City, and at least outwardly imposing its will on the Manchu Court within.

And not only is there a strong garrison to defend the Legations, but all the way down to Tientsien, and then from Tientsien to the sea, which is twenty miles off, and once again north to Shanhaikwan, there are other little garrisons of occupation-troops, twelve in number. Some, as at Tientsien and Shanhaikwan, are composed of soldiers of many nations; others have a single flag, French, German, British, or some other flying above them, proclaiming the presence of an armed detachment of one of the most Christian Powers. The Legations have protected themselves as strongly as they can in Peking itself, short of so outraging propriety that the farce of being on friendly terms with the Chinese Government could not be kept up. But in addition to that they have linked themselves with Tientsien by means of these railway station detachments; Tientsien itself is strongly garrisoned; and then to the sea by two

routes, east and north-east, the road is kept open by the same means against possible surprises carried out in the old manner. Then there is the Marconi connection with another wireless station on the dreary mud-flats of Taku, which can send electric wave signals to any fleet lying on the Bar, and bring thousands of sailors to the help of the soldiers in a very few hours. Not only this, but the famous Taku forts, which have played such a great if inglorious part in the Eurasian history of the last half century, have been dismantled and razed to the ground; the Tientsien city wall, which proved such a hard nut for the Allies to crack in 1900, has also disappeared; the mud-laden Peiho River is being straightened out so that not only steamers but gunboats can steam up to the Bund rapidly and speak their will; and thus in many ways the Chinese offensiveness has been reduced to defencelessness and all possibility of a *revanche* removed. At least so think the men recently from Europe who do not know the East. This whole defence undertaking, with numberless little precautionary measures, such as the establishment of well-equipped military intelligence offices at Tientsien, the exclusion of Chinese troops from various zones which are still deemed dangerous, the absence and prohibition of Chinese arsenals anywhere near, smells strongly of the united intelligence of eleven Powers, who, having laid their heads together, would produce a state of affairs making another Turkey of China; if the Chinaman's history, which includes a great number of successful

dealings with the Turks, did not prove that his country has never been a Turkey and never will be one, and that the conqueror within the gates has always suffered one of two fates — has been forced to retreat or has been quickly assimilated.

Thus musing, you steam along the eighty odd miles of the Tientsien road, with the flags of the little foreign garrisons at the bigger railway stations nodding at you, and begging you to consider their side of the question. If you do, you immediately conclude that the Germans and the French and their flags are much too much *en evidence*, and that the two Powers who really count in the Far East, England and Japan, have not been assertive enough. Ten years ago, Germans and French could not be allied together in this strange manner; to-day everything is possible.

Tientsien looms up, but it is a new Tientsien without its Black Forts, big walls, and waving banners which used to proclaim it the rowdiest city of the Empire. There are none of these things now, and in place thereof only a great broad road called the Viceroy's road, which sweeps from the Tientsien city station through the heart of the native town until it comes out on to the foreign bunds and concessions. And since Yuan Shih-kai, the great Viceroy, may have no armed troops near him excepting viceregal escort, this road and all the other modern roads of the native city are patrolled by so-called police, armed only with wooden staves, and uniformed after the manner of the reformed Chinese soldiery.

There are more than three thousand of these men, all tall, well-built fellows, who can swing their staffs up to the salute in a way which shows you that the rifle is their weapon, and that in twenty-four hours you could convert the whole into a picked body of infantrymen.

Placed on this broad road, Viceroy Yuan Shih-kai's Yamen is a very modest affair for such a dominant person as this Honan man, who has made no mistakes, although he has been exposed to such crucial tests as the 1898 *coup d'état* and the Boxer business of 1900. For in both he was expected to be a prime mover who would decide the day — at least temporarily — and in both cases he did not move. In 1898 the reform party, with the weak and sexless Emperor in their hands, expected co-operation from Yuan Shih-kai, and had even duly arranged for it, it is whispered, to the best of their ability. Yuan was no Viceroy in those days, but merely a high official in charge of a *corps d'élite* of 8,000 foreign-drilled troops at the Hsiao-chan camp, which is a stone's throw from Tientsien. According to the plans of the reformers, Yuan, as a loyal official, was to march to the rescue of his Emperor, and to back the Reform Decrees with a display of force. But Yuan Shih-kai was no novice in such affairs, and knew his Chinese history too well. He waited for time to sift things into their proper perspective and to give men their true valuation; and his instinct did not betray him. The masterful Empress Dowager soon arranged things in the Palace, and

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VICEROY YÜAN SHIH-KAI.

the weak Emperor once more collapsed and was forgotten. Again, in 1900, when, as independent Governor of Shantung with no Viceroy overseeing him, Yuan Shih-kai was in the very centre of the Boxer business and his very own master, he waited patiently with his good troops, who might have made all the difference in the world, without stirring or giving a sign. And in the end Yuan Shih-kai received his due reward; for in August and September of 1900, when the bubble had burst, he used his men for the first time. Acting rapidly, they drove all fugitive Boxers and disbanded Chinese soldiery over the borders of Shantung, and, whilst foreign troops were overrunning Chihli and other provinces, not one of them ventured into Shantung. Then when Li Hung Chang died Yuan Shih-kai received Tientsien and the important Chihli Viceroyalty as his reward; and it was the self-same *corps d'élite*, preserved intact through all these troubles, which escorted the Empress Dowager back into the Palace and provided her with a powerful guard until she should regain confidence. It is again this corps, with its picked men at work as drill-sergeants, which is rapidly making other corps no less efficient all over the north of China; and in a very few months these drill-sergeants, or others taught by them, will be doing the same thing in every part of the country until the old Chinese soldier is known no more.

Thus, with only a small mounted bodyguard, horsed on Australian chargers purchased from the

fatuous German Expeditionary Corps of 1900, waiting in the narrow courtyards of his Yamen, and his 3,000 unarmed military police on the streets, clever Yuan Shih-kai may seem far less important than he really is; but appearances are often deceptive in China, and the men that really count are seldom appraised at their right value on foreign markets. And the question that everyone is asking now is, whether important Yuan Shih-kai is pro-Japanese at heart or pro-Russian, since this will mean much when the war comes to an end. Some say that after the Seoul affairs and the Japanese war of 1894, nobody could expect him to be a friend of the Japanese, because no other than Yuan Shih-kai was for many years stationed in Korea at the time of the diplomatic struggle between the Courts of Peking and Tokyo, and was actually Imperial Chinese Resident, instructed by Li Hung Chang at Seoul before the outbreak of war. Others maintain that he distrusts the Russians, and that it is impossible for him to place any faith in them since the events of 1903. All these people, however, are talking for the sake of talking, and miss the crucial point. For Yuan Shih-kai, in common with every Chinese official, high and low, is pro-Chinese and pro-nothing else. He is an opportunist, with a convenient memory, as far as concerns all non-Chinese things, and he will remain so while China is what she is at present — without any strong hand at the helm. He is pro-Japanese up to a certain point, although never beyond it, because he has at last thoroughly understood (and

he is the first high Chinese official who has ever done this) that efficiency is the key-note of modern success, and that the Japanese are willing, nay, anxious, that the Chinese should learn everything they can teach them. Therefore, he is willing most certainly to accept a tuition which will be cheaper and more thorough than that offered by any other country. But Yuan Shih-kai also never forgets that the Russian frontier marches with the Chinese frontier for several thousand miles, and that the old Chinese proverb bids the people fear the wolf of the North and not the cock of the South. Knowing all this, Yuan Shih-kai is all things to all men. He has a Norwegian colonel attached to his staff, who, because he wears the coveted Cross of St. George, is supposed to represent the Russian side of the question. But he also has a Japanese colonel and some Japanese instructors elsewhere, and in this way neither side may yet say what his real feelings are. The corner-stone of the Chinese Governmental structure in internal affairs is equipoise, and in semi-foreign relations it has been found equally useful. Yuan Shih-kai, at the present moment, is truly a man amongst men, and the right one in the right place; and the fact that he is no admirer of British diplomacy in the Far East shows that diplomacy to be very poorly represented. In less than ten years' time the fates will force Yuan Shih-kai to show his hand; but what that hand is to be no one can yet say.

From this Viceregal Yamen which looks so insignificant, but which hides so much that is important at the present moment, you pass by means of a drawbridge across the narrow Peiho, push through crowded streets filled with rickshaws, a struggling crowd of coolies and the rapidly vanishing Peking cart, until you come on a bund which in length now almost rivals its prototypes of Shanghai and Hankow. Foreign concession follows foreign concession, for every nationality who desired it secured after 1900 the right to a piece of waterfront with a stretch of hinterland behind, and now polices it with its own police, and subjects it to the laws and regulations of its own municipality or Consul. You can drive for several miles along this bund, but along it there are only two concessions which count, and which are really European in aspect; the English settlement, because it has been there for over forty years, and contains to-day all the shops, hotels, clubs, and business houses and life of the place; and the French, because having had the good luck to have been founded at the time of the Anglo-French Expedition of 1860, it has received the overspill from its richer neighbour for four decades. The same is exactly true of Shanghai. But, as in Hankow, building is going on everywhere; hundreds of Europeans are coming in, and in a few years the foreign town will be a very big one.

German uniforms are as much to be seen here in Tientsien as they have been all the way down the

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railway from Peking, and the German officer, mounted on the diminutive China pony, bids you remember that it was his Minister Plenipotentiary who was killed in 1900, his Field-Marshal who nominally commanded the assembled Allies, and finally his Kaiser who has led and can still lead England by the nose in China, in spite of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, and in spite of all the protests which have resounded in the Press. Thus the Germans from Peking to Tientsien make just as much of a parade in a sphere in which they have but few interests, as they do from Shanghai to Hankow, where they have had the effrontery to challenge openly the English right to consider the great Valley as inalienable to any European Power. Nowhere can the spectacle of the Mailed Fist policy arouse more ire than it does in the Far East. For everywhere the German, following in quietly behind along the road the Englishman has prepared, now contests privileges acquired long ago, and by his mean and intriguing policy seeks to gain for himself petty advantages which some day may be turned to account.

But it is small wonder that Tientsien, which is the real gate to Peking, should be still so military in aspect, since the seat of war is so close that it is at times more than exciting. At the summer resort of Peitaiho, which is but a couple of hours away, you can sit in your bungalow, and when the wind blows faintly from the east, listen to the booming of Port Arthur cannon which is borne faintly but distinctly

across the shallow Gulf of Pechili, a trifle of 130 miles, so that with the latest news from Tokyo and some knowledge of the fortress, you may fully realise the hell of shot and shell that is being vomited from a thousand cannon mouths in savage effort to break the defence — the cries of agony, and the stab of steel, as assault follows counter-assault and thousands fall. There is education in this east wind which blows so faintly with the scorching northern heat beating down; for, linked to you by iron rails, the Legation fortress, which has created and brought about all these things, and is even now inspiring others, is also uneasily understanding these sounds and dreading their consequences. It is the North which is more implicated in the war than Central or Southern China — the North that the Russians have always understood but never conquered. Now the Japanese, the French, and the Germans are appraising this North at its true value, and each one, desirous of having a more important voice, is daily attempting to increase its hold. Alone England refuses to understand. This North China with Peking and its armed Legations; with Tientsien and its thousands of International troops camped round the foreign settlements; with its powerful Viceroy Yuan Shih-kai, who has survived two crucial tests; with its millions of hardy people who are born to become soldiers and command the rest of China; this is the one spot above all others on which attention should shortly

be concentrated. Shanghai, the Yangtsze Valley, and the rest of China form only the wooden shaft, necessary but not decisive. This North is the steel head of which Sir Robert Hart speaks, and which, fitted to the stave, can smash all intrigues into a thousand pieces.

CHAPTER XIII

THE DISPUTED SEAS AND THE TRADE IN CONTRABAND

At Tientsien (for the time of writing) you are almost between two fires; for although the Russians have already been beaten back from Newchwang and the Japanese have taken their place, the thunder of defiant Port Arthur is still crashing out, as I have said, but a hundred and odd miles across the shallow Gulf of Pechili. And from Tientsien you can still sneak easily into the main Russian lines by keeping to the Northern Chinese Railways until you reach Hsin-ming-tun, which is railhead and neutral territory, and then making a dash by cart or pony across the river Liao to Moukden, but forty miles off.

Along this route is the way much contraband has travelled, from Roederer's sweetest champagnes destined for the crack Russian regiments which have much money to spend, to Krupp's most damaging shells which are trickling forward in small quantities all the time, and easing the strain on the Siberian and Manchurian railways. All is

grist that comes to the contrabandist's mill, as he simply undertakes to deliver to army contractors in the field whatever is given to him in unblockaded ports. Once his receipts are signed, he may hie himself back post-haste to cash drafts and army orders on Europe, and begin quickly the same process all over again. It is not a very perilous business either, but if one has one's own capital embarked it is risky and, as likely as not, may be disastrous. The profits, however, are so big and quick to come, being anything from fifty to two hundred per cent., that there are many of all nationalities staking many queer stakes on war's roulette table. Before Newchwang was lost this contraband trade was nothing at all, for then there was the alternate route, the sea-route, open, and on thick nights even Japanese torpedo-boats are easily dodged. But then in the early days of the war, exciting February, April, and May, everything was in such terrible confusion with the Russian collapse that the days were allowed to pass away with unearned profits irrevocably lost because it seemed as if there would soon be no Russia at all to cater for. And then the Russian is also so improvident that he will not buy until there is an actual shortage. As long as he has a week's supplies he will swear there is enough for years, even for centuries if necessary; and the war has only been teaching the vast majority of people what a small minority knew a very long time ago.

The contraband rush to the main Russian armies,

therefore, which only began when it was really too late to do very much on a large scale, has still been going on steadily ever since. So little by little, an ounce here and a catty there, as Chang Chih-tung would say, contraband has been trickling through by railway and even by road from the adjacent province of Chihli to Kuropatkin's main forces, and has at least supplied many luxuries which would have been otherwise quite unobtainable.

How curious and picturesque is the frontier town of Hsin-ming-tun which marks the terminus of the Imperial Chinese Railways on the right or neutral bank of the river Liao. Pushing up slowly from Shanhaikwan by a train, in which you find all manner of nondescripts from the unshaven Greek to the tearful Jew bemoaning the travel-difficulties of this extreme East, you at last reach Hsin-ming-tun, the Ultima Thule of all this motley collection of men. You have left far behind you the International occupation troops and the inner Chinese problem after you passed through the Great Wall at Shanhaikwan, and now have a greater and a more terrible one in front of you. Here in this dust-laden town, where the dry soil rises all day long in yellowish clouds, are gathered together a strange mixture of men — all of them contrabandists, pushing through their cargo night and day by the plentiful distribution of bribes and backsheesh. Moukden lies forty miles away — due east — and down the Moukden trail come Cossacks and Russian gendarmes trying to pick out the Japanese spies who

abound here, crudely disguised as Chinese merchants. A correspondent or two there is also trusting to the tender mercies of the Chinese telegraphs to get through cables describing what the latest arrival from the blood-soaked right bank of the Liao imagines to have taken place; around you are Hunghutzu bands or alleged Hunghutzu bands; and rival armies and robbers make you feel that you are between the devil and the deep blue sea. Teams of mules and ponies attached to the long country-carts are also travelling, uneasily seeking buyers at the Russian Commissariat headquarters. A little hotel has even arisen here — a mere make-shift affair operated by an ex-American soldier of the 1900 expeditionary forces; and from late night to early morning come strange wayfarers arrayed in still stranger costumes with pockets full of rouble notes. For credit has long been non-existent here; and only bribing right and left, and a continued paying out of money, can accomplish the difficult task of bringing drinkables and other things all the way from Tientsien until they reach the Kuropatkin camp. Beyond, and even as thick around you as the yellowish dust itself, there is nothing but the feeling and rumour of war. Everyone who moves a hundred yards is hit in the chest by rumours; and if you creep down the left bank of the river until you can see the outposts of the rival armies, you may realise something of the nature of the mighty hosts of men here concentrated. The feeling of war is heavy in the air, but of actual news there is none.

And your every movement, should you move about, is being watched by someone who feigns intense interest in something else, if you in turn should throw inquisitive looks on the sleuth hounds who would track you down and know your business. In Hsin-ming-tun there is nothing to be learnt unless the true account of what men will pay for contraband.

Even when you are back in Tongku, twenty miles below Tientsien, and have started wandering about vaguely searching for a launch to carry you to your steamer, you feel somewhere in the small of your back, which has become extraordinarily sensitive in these war-times, that you have become an object of more than passing interest to sundry little men in khaki slop suits who are also wandering about, apparently searching for the same launch. If you seek to mystify them by pulling papers out of one pocket and stuffing them hastily into another with hurried looks cast around you, you will be instantly rewarded by having a little bronze man step nonchalantly into your launch behind you. You are suspected; perhaps on your person can be found the valuable proof of some profitable little enterprise concerned with Port Arthur — for who can say what a little brown man is thinking of? The Japanese are as clever spies as the French, although they lack perhaps the imagination of the Russian, who can smell sedition and conspiracy in ways not apparent to anyone else. But fortunately for you, your ship pushes off, and with it the plot you conceal must be lost sight of, for you head across the muddy Taku

bars where the big ocean-going craft lie miles and miles out at sea and cannot be followed.

Contraband and complots, wars and attacks, disappear for a short time as the pea-soupy water changes slowly to light yellow, then to a whitey-yellow, once again to a green-yellow, until it finally becomes clear. But the shallow Gulf of Pechili with its fast-silting bottom is a sounding-board, if there ever was one; and eight hours from Tientsien, if the air is quite still, you begin to hear a curious suggestion of noise far off, very far off. You strain your ears until your head aches, and you wish the engines would not thump so rhythmically and confuse you. But it is no use straining, there is but a far-away suggestion of sound, vague, confusing, irritating, and tantalising — it is the bombardment of Port Arthur still proceeding. You are still many miles away, but the heavy cannonade shivers in the air and grows in volume as you progress along the Shantung coast.

The next question is, How near are you going to pass? The ordinary ship's course from Tientsien to Chefoo leaves the defiant Russian fortress thirty miles away at least, which puts Port Arthur too low beneath the horizon to see even the reflection of the night flashing. If you are going from Shanghai to Newchwang, or *vice versâ*, you are more lucky, for you pass the Laotishan headline but ten miles off, and for a short time you are almost a privileged spectator of tremendous events. In the old days before the war when you were on this course, your ship came

in so close on its northern journey (in order to leave the Miaotiao islands far on the port beam), that in daytime you could see the summer camps of the Russian soldiery twinkling on the grey-black headlines of the Regent's Sword. There were merely little white toadstools of tents spreading out all over the hill-slopes in their thousands with the great seaforts away to the right and the famous narrow entrance lost to all view.

But it had been whispered before we left Tongku that our good ship was to stand in very close to Port Arthur before putting over the helm and making Chefoo. There had been a wreck on the Miaotiao islands, and no news had been heard of a certain vessel which had deliberately attempted the blockade a week before. It was all a little vague, but there was no cause to repine, as the two solitary passengers were given the chance by the captain to change their minds before it was too late. But no one had objected in the slightest.

The day wore on, the shadows lengthened, and the distant thunder became clearer and clearer. It was still too far off, however, for the German captain's attentive ears, but almost imperceptibly we began losing three or four knots an hour. The telegraph did not ring, but private instructions conveyed from bridge to engine room slipped down unnoticed by all except a Shantung deck-hand, who, after the Chinese manner, must have felt it. For suddenly stopping his polishing work on some brass fittings, he gazed at the ship's side and swore

quietly under his breath. It was as clear as daylight to him; there had been no undertaking for contraband work, which is a risky business at sea, and here we were 'twixt Laotishan and the Shantung Promontory losing three or four knots under private instructions. The Shantung hand continued to gaze and swear; it was not the extra danger which he minded, but the loss of the extra dollars to which he was entitled for accompanying such work filled him with ire. Later, it was certain he would ask silver to silence his mouth.

The ship lolled forward and night slowly fell on oily seas. At eight in the evening the booming was steady, at nine it was distinct, and before four bells had rung, flashes to the north-east began to play on the horizon. The search-lights on the sea-forts were evidently busy. The lonely passengers asked permission to climb the rigging; we swore we enjoyed it and knew we were looking for wrecks. The nervous skipper waved his hands in assent and, binocular-armed, we swarmed clumsily up aloft. Yes, there was Port Arthur, the besieged about which all the world is raving; devil-me-care Port Arthur that is going to die certainly as it lived. Silhouetted by the blinking electric flashes, dim headlines could be faintly discerned. Nearest us was mighty Laotishan heaving many hundreds of feet up into the air, with lesser hills crouching gloomily behind.

The thunder so distant and faint all the afternoon was here distinct, the deeper undertone of siege

artillery and heavy fortress guns supporting a higher and thinner roar. Was a general attack in progress?

With ever lessening speed we floated on due east — we must be nearly inside the mine-fields by now, and then — Bang! something flashed off not three hundred yards from us and we held our breath. The telegraph on the bridge rang frantically enough now, but it was too late — a long black destroyer slipped through the water towards us with the curious jerk which carries such craft almost into you before you have realised that they are there. Then a little cracked Japanese voice bid us heave to. The German skipper left the bridge and came down the companion ladder with heavy step. In less than a minute he had the ship's paper ready for inspection, and when the destroyer-commander tripped merrily on board with armed blue-jackets, who took their places mechanically in full command of the bridge, it was only to find that the ship was more than half empty, that her documents were above suspicion, and that what she carried could not possibly be used in a beleaguered fortress. Too many coasters had been held up lately on mere suspicion for the pastime to be as creditable as it might seem at first sight, and so scratching his head in perplexity the commander said:—

"Then why are you standing in so close?"

The German skipper lied at once cleanly and easily.

"De log will show you that at 8.30 we see rockets and stand in out of the regular course.

Dese gentlemen will say it is true; dey have been in the rigging for two hours looking."

Since it was obviously the game — whatever the game was — we too lied loyally; and after a while the little Japanese, accepting the situation like a gentleman, wished us good-night, but said he would see us safe away.

Long afterwards in the night, when the captain had blown out his ill-humour in strange curses and drunk himself into tolerable spirits with the aid of those contained in square-faced bottles, he unburdened himself, under promise that so long as Port Arthur stood we must keep silent. Then it transpired that it was not blockade-running or contraband which carried him so far, but despatch-work. Once already on a previous occasion Russian and not Japanese torpedo boats had met him and exchanged bags. "I have a little star which watches for me," ended our skipper friend; "My lights were going up when, no, I says, wait a little and smell about. If de Jap seen those signals, we would now be running for Sasebo." Thus does one steam through curious seas in which everybody is interested in one belligerent or the other.

With Chefoo looming up in front of you in the morning, there is again a different scene. Here you are at the news-outport, and correspondents in their dozens lurk everywhere. Port Arthur is but seventy miles as the crow flies from this delectable spot, and from Chefoo the contraband industry is

largely directed. It is a double-contrabrand trade, too, for if the Russian at Port Arthur is supplied, so is the Japanese at Dalny, since the whole of the lower Liaotung, that is the Kuantung peninsula, has always depended much on Shantung for both its men and its trade.

Chefoo is a pretty place as places go in the East, and its deep blue waters, so sparkling and clear, are a real relief after the eternal mud-bars and ochre-coloured anchorages which haunt you everywhere in China. It is a bustling port, too, with dozens of steamers always coming and going and a huge block of native shipping clustering thick as flies — testifying to the fact that the days of the junk, even as a coaster, are far from being numbered. Directly in front of you stands a hill crowned with Consulates and high-flung flagstaff. To the left a sandy beach stretches evenly away for a mile or two; to the right is the inner anchorage with godowns and native houses clustering thick behind it. The war, although it has ruined legitimate trade with Russians across the seventy-mile strip of sea, has yet made Chefoo grow in an astonishing manner for a China port. Dozens of new faces have come from nobody knows where; the town has now an English newspaper; building is going on everywhere; the indifferent hotels formerly only used for the summer-bathing season are full to overflowing with men of all nationalities; the jetties are blocked with cargo standing mountain high; and the community is clamouring to be erected into an International

News from Port Arthur. The Commander of the Russian Destroyer "Rastaroping" landing at Chefoo, 15th November, 1904.

[*Face page* 306, *Vol. I.*

The End of a Torpedo-boat Messenger.

Settlement with power to govern itself. Chefoo is a proof of the fact that wherever you put money into a place in China, there will Chinese congregate in increasing numbers, also investing their savings side by side with the European, knowing full well that where the white man is, security and good government can be found. That this little place will one day be of value is testified also by the fact that the great Catholic missions, whose financial affairs are directed by priests possessing a market-knowledge which has become proverbial in China, are busily buying land and building. Just round the corner of Shantung is German Tsingtao, bent on monopolising all the province; but in spite of all endeavours Chefoo will defeat such plans.

In the land-locked harbour for the time being, however, the thing of the hour is the war and matters connected therewith and nothing else. Everybody is still excited over the well-known destroyer incident, and although the community is mainly English, the balance of local opinion has set strongly against the Japanese action. For if one is to believe local evidence, the Japanese torpedo-craft which performed the cutting-out operation of the *Reshitelni* threatened to torpedo the Chinese cruisers then lying in the harbour and charged with preserving the neutrality of the port; and I have heard a Chinese boatswain swear that he heard this threat repeated not once but several times, and saw with his own eyes the Japanese sailors ready to carry out their words from the

mouths of their torpedo-tubes. It would require the most careful sifting of evidence to decide on whom the blame should fall, but there is no doubt that the Chefoo affair, like the Chemulpo incident, was bad policy and will bring its own reward.

As if to accentuate the exaggerated importance given the place, you will find Japanese "agents" everywhere watching everything there is to watch; agents in mufti and agents whose thin overcoats scarcely cover military uniforms. This watching has been carried to such a pitch that it has defeated its purpose and generated such a cauldron of suspicion, distrust, and jealousy, that the Chinese — the big, simple Shantung men — are now laughing all the time and only see the ludicrous side of it all. For not only have Russian complots to be unearthed, but Chinese as well. The local Chinese, it is true, do not at heart care a button who wins; but they have set to work as usual to make the most money possible out of the war from spies, correspondents, contraband-traffic, the giving of true and false information — out of anything that has a value on war's fluctuating markets. And they are a curious race. Not one of these men has heard or read of a modern siege before, and yet they know all about Port Arthur and Japanese plans and Russian counter-preparations, and can even draw you sketches of the general position. They also talk learnedly about parallels and saps and tell you that there is nothing new in them, and that everybody has known it was the only way for the

Japanese to get near. Is it that the Chinaman has an inherited instinct about sieges? Nearly all the history of purely Chinese warfare concerns itself with sieges, of unwieldy armies trying to smash down city-walls and generally failing. It is probably this that makes the local natives who have been to Port Arthur sceptical about Japanese success, and causes them to argue that so long as the Russians *wa wa* (dig) night and day, the Japanese have little chance of bursting in.

And now, apart from the war, there is in Chefoo the new South African coolie trade. What are the Chinese saying about this? They are in the position of Mr. Midshipman Easy when he told his boat's crew to wait a little before attacking because he had got a bite. When Port Arthur is finished with and the vast rival armies block up all Manchuria, the Shantung Chinaman may think about going to the Rand. At present there is too much money to be made at home for him to emigrate largely.

Whilst the Japanese watch them, and the Chinese look on and laugh and serve everyone with the strictest neutrality and impartiality, the Russians are not idle at Chefoo. It is true, however, that the Marconi installation, set up a few miles outside Chefoo by the Russian Consulate, never worked successfully. Some messages are supposed to have been sent and some received, but the facts that the Japanese can mangle everything with the cordon of Marconi-armed ships they have around Port Arthur, and

that they even raided the Chefoo installation and tore it down at night, are sufficient to show that it was never of any practical value. But as a provisioning dépôt Chefoo has been invaluable, although it is a mistake to suppose that blockade-runners have started in any number from this harbour. Chefoo is merely the headquarters for those who direct the native contraband trade, and the prefecture of Tengchow, which lies on the extreme north-east point of the Shantung Promontory, and is but sixty miles from Port Arthur, is the main point of shipment. And these blockade-runners are very hard to catch, for they are not steamers. They are the stoutly built junks of North China. They lie very low in the water, have no towering stern-sheets or curved prows after the manner of the junks of Central and Southern China, but rely on the enormous thickness of their timbers, which makes them exceptionally buoyant, to carry them over the treacherous waters between the Liaotung and Shantung. Seldom of more than thirty or forty tons burden, they load their fat cargoes with the utmost unconcern until the water is almost up to the gunwales. Then everything is battened down, and the various divisions into which the junk is divided are made into so many water-tight compartments by using quantities of native oil-cloth and tarpaulins, which, wedged down and gripped by hemp rope duly dampened, soon clamp as tight as a vice. The junks thus equipped creep off the north-eastern coast with the wind against them and tack for the

Miaotiao islands, which are pepper-castored more than half-way across the narrow strip of sea. Around these islands they lurk and wait, perhaps a day, perhaps a week; it is merely a matter of time for the summer and autumn winds to veer and blow up from the south. Then at night time they at last cast off and make a dash for it, and with luck daylight finds them under Laotishan or near Pigeon Bay.

The Japanese have done their very best to prevent this illicit traffic, but have almost completely failed, because the rakish junk succeeds easily where it would be mere foolishness for a steamer to attempt the passage. Once for a short time — nine days, I think it was — there was an absolutely effective blockade of Port Arthur, a blockade so close and so vigilant that even the periscope of a submarine would have been discovered. Battleships and cruisers kept their search-lights playing on every inch of sea; smaller cruisers were nearer in and a triple torpedo-boat cordon moved ceaselessly to and fro so close inshore, that nothing could have possibly got through. But after a bit the junkmen, who had been scornfully commenting on such unlawful proceedings, knocked out their pipes and prepared again for active business. They knew that such a watch could not be kept up very long in calm and storm, and their market-knowledge stood them in good stead. How many junks have got into Port Arthur every month it is impossible to compute, but the number often has run into hundreds.

Leaving Chefoo and its picturesque harbour behind, fifty miles to the south you pass Weihaiwei. Few steamers touch at this much-discussed British possession, although the number is more considerable than it was a year or two ago. But there is now a daily ferry-steamer service between Chefoo and the British leased port, and mails and passengers are, therefore, able to pass regularly to and fro. In Weihaiwei there is not much to see. The haphazard policy of the British Government has reduced the splendid 1st Chinese Regiment, a body of men superior to most Indian troops, to four hundred and fifty rifles; the work on the fortifications has been stopped; and under the control of a Commissioner responsible to the Colonial Office, the counterpart of Port Arthur has degenerated into a mere summer sanatorium where the British China squadron may recruit after the heat of Hongkong.

Curling round the Shantung coast, which juts out so amazingly far into the Yellow Sea, a long twenty hours brings you to German Tsingtao. You are now nearly three hundred miles from Port Arthur, but still the insistent contraband trade is with you. But it is steam-made contraband and not a petty wind-blown commerce, for from Tsingtao German and Norwegian steamers dash for both Port Arthur and Vladivostock and often get through. One man frequents the German port owning a dirty little tramp which would not sell for £4,000, who boasts that he has been fifteen times into Port Arthur and is shortly to attempt the sixteenth voyage. But then

he is a notorious liar. With half North China conspiring to help the Russians by selling them at fabulous prices things they so need, and the other half talking loudly about breaches of neutrality and international law, you may have a very pleasant autumn cruise. But in front of Tsingtao contraband sinks to its proper place, which is rather low, and empire-building, more cautious and more economical there than the Russian, at once engages your attention.

CHAPTER XIV

TSINGTAO AND THE KIAOCHOW TERRITORY

THE cliffs, which have been coal-black and menacing along the latter part of your steamer-journey, and have made you feel how iron-bound is the Shantung coast, at last begin to fall away in more graceful and less grim-faced curves when you approach the German Colony, as if inviting your kind attention. Ten miles from Tsingtao Bay, Cape Ya-tou, the last headland, is passed, and, putting the helm up sharply, your steamer pushes straight for the coast-line which opens up suddenly into a neck of sea. At the entrance is a lighthouse painted in clean red and white stripes, a lighthouse perched on a reef over which the sea dashes in calm and storm. It marks the entrance to a landlocked harbour. Beating out to sea is, perhaps, a stray junk or two, but of other life there is none.

You see nothing at first excepting some red-brick buildings on the shoulder of a hill, which is a new German brewery, now become necessary to supply the many sons of the Fatherland in the Far East with their light beer. To the right and left of the

bay there are cold treeless hills, which, towering high in the air towards the south, provide admirable positions for heavy artillery. You slip through a buoyed channel, and you notice that the entrance is not as yet all that is to be desired; it is too narrow and too treacherous. The mud and slime which are conspicuous by their absence on the Chefoo side of Shantung here spread far out to sea and, coming at low water into full view, have made a huge dredging scheme necessary for the port. Should you have been long in the East, and see in your scheme of things only heavily verandahed houses, German Tsingtao on coming into view gives you a sharp shock; it is a piece almost of old-fashioned Germany planted in the middle of a Chinese wilderness, and looking strange and wonderful. You come on it very suddenly as your steamer swings in gaily whistling, and there before you is a brightly coloured blob of picturesque buildings standing out clean and clear-cut as a cameo on the brown-yellow background. It has certainly needed all the magic of the Kaiser's wand to create this place, and at a distance it is extraordinarily picturesque. Red and green roofed houses with white stuccoed fronts framed in wood are there; houses with miniature mediæval towers growing out of the wrong places lean over them: others possessing porches and loggias with green-painted woodwork and lemon-coloured walls shut them in behind; heavy houses of undressed granite are there too, and all these and many others blend themselves together in a charm-

ing way, and, crowned by a German church in the old style, make a picture in the setting sun not easily to be forgotten. For this is pure West thrust without compromise on pure East.

You sweep away to the left, however, making for the inner harbour, and for the time being the German town is lost, for Tsingtao is an orderly port which has been created entirely by unnatural means, and to anchor as you would in other Eastern places would possibly entail an imprisonment in some mock-dungeon which would end in death.

Round the bend, the plan of Tsingtao is clear to you. It is very much like Dalny, in fact so much so that there can be no doubt that the Russian engineer Sakharof, who constructed the great leased-territory failure, simply came to Tsingtao and copied everything he thought good there and likely to conjure up commercial life. First, there is an inner harbour with great stone piers and breakwaters, now almost completed; then an outer harbour, which will be of vast and magnificent size, and on which dredgers and pile-drivers, stone-masons and foundation-layers are methodically at work, but which cannot be completed for years. Crouching near these is a Chinese junk anchorage, which in time will be also improved, and on a piece of foreshore the great Tsingtao floating dock, a huge steel structure, which will be able to accommodate the largest German battleships, is being quickly put together. By 1905 this dock will be completed at a cost of many millions of marks, and in German

hopes it is confidently expected that when another granite dock under contemplation is also ready, cheap dock rates will take all the business of Continental shipping away from the English yards of Hongkong and Shanghai and give Tsingtao a maritime importance which as yet it does not enjoy. Behind the harbour and away from the shipping is the town of which you have caught a glimpse.

As you float alongside the granite piers very slowly you notice that the harbour launches are all German manned; instead of having Chinese crews on board, it is the time-expired German sailor from the Kaiser's Asiatic squadron who does the work. And as you come ashore the coolie gangs are hoarsely shouted at by German overseers in blue Mützu and a semi-uniform which would be impossible elsewhere in the Far East. It is an artificially created port with a vengeance. Everything has been thought out in the study, every detail has been carefully gone into and weighed, and the sons of the happy Fatherland have been foisted on every Government department or quasi-Government department so that Germanisation may be as apparent as possible. Of Russification there has lately been much talk; soon Germanisation will be equally advertised, if my nose does not betray me.

Coming alongside stone piers is a painfully slow business, which gives ample time to survey surroundings. Tsingtao is not very gay, but it is better than Dalny, because the German is more cautious than

the Russian, and having but little of the Slav enthusiasm and gambling spirit that creates without calculating, he has gone very deliberately to work. Yet but four steamers lay alongside the commercial pier, three German and one English, whilst a fifth, discharging into native boats, swung in the stream, and even this lading and discharging was proceeding with a method and a lack of noise which was not of the East. Even over such matters it seems patent that the paternal Government keeps a strict eye. On the wharf ran a double line of rails, for the German railway connects directly with the sea; but the export trade was represented by but two goods-waggons, which, freighted with raw cotton, waited bashfully until they could be attended to. Beyond were a row of low godowns running parallel with the water, into which cargo was being slowly discharged; and a German policeman, in the orthodox schützmann's tin helmet and braided uniform and armed with a sword, stood in company with three Chinese policemen and saw that no one made too much noise or importuned travellers — two things which give the zest to life by making one angry. The rickshaws, which everywhere else would have been charging down on you with fierce Boxer shouts and a Cossack disregard for your legs, were not even in the middle distance; they were held back like hounds in the leash many hundreds of yards away by a cordon of police, and doubtless terrible penalties awaited those who crossed this schützmann's rubicon. There is something curiously unnatural in

seeing the Chinaman thus restrained in his own country; and not only something unnatural, but something which must inevitably reap its own reward.

On the other side of the inner harbour lay German gunboats and torpedo-craft in some number, and near them the disgraced Russian battleship *Czarewitch*. What a disgrace in all truth to see this magnificent 13,000 ton battleship hiding unashamed in a neutral harbour. Only slightly hammered by the Japanese fire during the naval sortie of the 10th August, with her magazine choked with ammunition, and the greatest damage done merely to her smoke-stacks, the *Czarewitch* was not courageous enough to accept a death struggle, which might have at least accounted for a Japanese ship, and given the Baltic Fleet a definite superiority in numbers. Had the original Port Arthur fleet, with all its inefficiency, behaved but with common courage the Japanese might have met with an impossible task at sea. But with men like the Russian sailors and officers nothing is possible excepting disasters. It was here that I was informed by a German naval officer that two of the *Czarewitch's* twelve-inch guns had never been brought into action at all on August 10th, and that even the broadside batteries had fired an incredibly small number of shots. The officer added that when the ship came into Tsingtao, the confusion and disorder on board were such as he had never believed to have been possible on any ship, and that

there was not a German who did not feel that the Russian navy existed simply in name. In other words, the *Czarewitch*, although practically unscathed, was panic-stricken. Even the Germans at Tsingtao, who are intensely pro-Russian in their sympathies, have placed the Russian officers of the interned battleship in coventry, and have told them to their faces that such cowardly conduct as theirs deserves no consideration. This is hardly a good augury for the Baltic Fleet if it arrives in Far Eastern waters.

Swarming down the gang-planks, we at last reached *terra firma;* and coolies, adorned with metal plates after the manner of German *gepäckträger*, carefully and somewhat sadly attended to the luggage. The German systematises everything. In spite of the most violent waving, the rickshaw men were not to be decoyed across their rubicon.

"Must I walk as far as that?" I inquired of my police friend of the tin helmet.

"It is not far," he said, encouragingly; "a little walk does no harm." So obeying Imperial dictates, I walked forward. If it had been at Dalny, twenty kopecks would have been all that was necessary.

From maritime Tsingtao, or the wharves, it is a long pull to the little German town. A broad road sweeps round a great open space, adorned for the moment by a few make-shift machine-shops, where later in the popular imagination factories and workshops in imposing numbers will make the air clang with their busy machinery. Half-way to the town

you pass under a railway bridge over which the railway runs to its city terminus. Then after a short half-mile of open country you meet the town.

What shall I say of German Tsingtao, with its one thousand civilian inhabitants, who call themselves in moments of enthusiasm, "Colonisten," and its twenty thousand restrained Chinese? It is hard to speak. The streets are well made, broad and properly attended to; the houses which flank them are well built and very German in appearance; their fittings comprise all modern electrical improvements. Everything that could be desired, and yet — there is something missing. It is that Tsingtao is still unnatural, one of those *tours de force* which may be accomplished anywhere by the spending of many millions, but which are not conclusive, proving that the most matter-of-fact people in Europe are mad when Imperialism is the issue.

The first street, however, is natural enough, since it is given over to the Chinese. Broad Shantungstrasse, which runs through the lower end of the town, is very busy, and is indeed the centre of most of the animation, because Chinese are permitted legally to live and do their business here. But they must not build their houses after their own manner, nor do other things as they please, and the result is that although the brick-facing on the streets is all right, the interior and interior arrangements of their dwellings are deplorable — coarse even for rough Shantung, where man-flesh is most lightly valued and is subjected to every kind of hardship. Then the

name of the street is spelt in a manner which revolts one — it is written Schantung strasse. The extra *c* may mean nothing in far-away Europe, but in China it is everything — it makes you pronounce the name of the province as Germans think it should be pronounced, and not as the Chinaman speaks it. This German transliteration follows you all over the town, and you only escape it when you are rescued by Kaiser Wilhelm and Kaiser Friedrich and other Kaisers whose names are perpetuated on street corners. To the Chinaman such names mean nothing, and so he proceeds in his own peculiar way by designating thoroughfares by such nicknames as the "four red-house street," "the sea street," etc., etc. In one case the length of a name has so affected even native risibilities, that the humble rickshaw-beast of burden has affixed the sarcasm "*chiao sang-tzu t'eng na-ko*" (or the one that makes your throat ache) to a street which the initiated need not be told of. Everywhere a strange labelling of names that have been correctly transliterated many years ago are to be seen. The English Thomas Wade system is the only one which clears your throat and allows you to speak Chinese like the native — and yet the German thinks otherwise.

Your rickshaw finally deposits you at the premier hotel of the place, the "Prince Heinrich," named after the Emperor's naval brother, who in 1898 undertook that wonderful and terrible voyage to the Far East at the head of a cruiser squadron with the object of impressing on the Chinese

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A Street in Tsingtao.

Government and people the might of Germany. The hotel is, however, as excellent as are all hotels under German management, for the Teuton is born into the world a master of detail, and, therefore, an excellent servant.

From the hotel verandahs you command an imposing view of the sea and of the surrounding hills. A parapeted Bund, beautifully finished and adorned with artistic lamp-posts, sweeps majestically along the sea-front; but instead of being thronged by busy crowds of natives buying and selling, and fighting and swearing after the gentle and pleasant manner of the country, it lies silent and deserted, except for an occasional rickshaw, or a still more rare carriage. For the hotel is in the middle of the residential and European quarter where the Chinaman venturing becomes sad and ashamed. Along the sea-front there are many other imposing buildings — hotels that in vain sigh for more business, business houses that have none too much commerce; and weed-grown, vacant lots, doubtless described as eminently desirable building-places, testify to the fact that Tsingtao has for the time being overgrown even its Berlin-fed strength.

Behind the hotel, and perhaps a thousand yards from the sea, a vast red-brick pile is slowly rising. Placed on a piece of rising ground, with nothing to dwarf its big outline, it looks an immense building. It is the Governor's future residence. Somehow it reminded one oddly of the palatial

new Port Arthur hotel, which must have been nearly completed when Togo's twelve-inch shells sounded its death-knell. There, too, in Port Arthur the same imposing site had been chosen, the same generous proportions planned by empire-builders, and flash! in one second, the dreams had vanished into thin air. . . .

European shops there are, too, in Tsingtao, but very patriotic and thoroughly German shops, where nothing which is not made in Germany is placed on sale. Here you can understand a little corner of that uninteresting problem, the fiscal question; for although Tsingtao is as yet no dump, you may see for yourself that there must be a tremendous over-production in Germany, because even here the meanest shops are bursting with every variety of goods — goods which are obtained on such hugely long credits that it really amounts to a commission-selling, which in the end often sees things hammered to Chinese far below their cost price, in a vain effort to clear accumulating stocks. How much of German produce, rushed out of the country to figure in export lists at fictitious rates, really represents dead loss in the end? In the small market of the Far East alone the yearly total must run into many millions of marks; and elsewhere the same must be equally true.

Thus musing, you are almost apt to forget when you are in the middle of the town that the Tsingtao programme is not only a colonial-commercial one, but also a naval-military programme, for uniforms

are met with only half as often as one expects in this little Kaiser-stadt. The explanation is that the various barracks of the Sea-battalion, the marine artillery, the mounted and colonial infantry, and the fortress artillery, all the heterogeneous mass of units that is the nucleus of the future German Port Arthur of the East, are four or five miles away. Perched on windy slopes, which are, however, sheltered from the bitter north winds of winter, stand generous brick barracks, designed on a big scale and capable of accommodating twice the present garrison, which numbers three thousand men. The military-naval scheme of things is, therefore, the frame which surrounds and supports the colonial-commercial. Each occupies a definite and well-thought-out place, and if prosperity and well-being can be wrested by a mere application of mechanics and mathematics, then Tsingtao will soon be one of the chosen spots of this earth. As yet, however, there are few signs of what the future really holds; and here in Tsingtao it is once again clear that Germany is always cursed with singular ill-luck in the selection of her colonies; for Tsingtao is posted in probably the poorest corner of all Shantung. There are no rich Chinese cities near which will enrich it with their barter; for even along the railway line, which is upwards of four hundred kilometres in length, there is nothing much. The soil in this region only succeeds in poorly feeding a vast population, now out of all proportion to

the development of the province; and what this population possesses in surplus cash for the purchase of commodities, and the amounts of raw stuffs it can offer for export, will not for many decades make the German colony self-supporting.

The colony, in spite of all these drawbacks, progresses in its own peculiar way. A number of local enterprises have been started, such as a silk filature, saw-mills, brick and tile factories, and machine-shops; and these, with the Government establishments, give employment to a large number of Germans and Chinese. But how little money is being made, except by such undertakings as are directly concerned with the upbuilding of the place, may be gauged from the fact that the silk-reeling ventures are losing money steadily, and that the expectations formed when these enterprises were started have been entirely disproved by subsequent experience. Labour, instead of being cheap in Tsingtao, which is a free port, is far dearer than in Chefoo or the Chinese hinterland. Provisions and food, which should be obtainable in great quantities from Shantung itself, are from 20 to 40 per cent. higher here than fifty miles inland. Chinese only come to the German colony with the same resolution as filled those who went to Manchuria under the Russian heel — of extorting the highest possible value for their services and then going home; and a brief examination of native rates showed me that it may be broadly said that Tsingtao prices are generally as much as 40 or 50 per cent. above those obtain-

ing in the rest of China. The Chinese police in Tsingtao only enlist on being paid 100 per cent. more than elsewhere where they are under foreign control. It is true that they are better men physically, and that rarely could such good specimens of muscular manhood be found; but that alone is not sufficient to justify such abnormal pay; and this is no isolated case. The wages of all domestic servants are proportionally high, and difficulty of obtaining even the most unskilled labour at a moderate price hampers all local enterprises. As for skilled labour, the old Port Arthur rates still rule here. By making a careful examination, I was forced to the conclusion that, as at Port Arthur, Dalny, and Harbin, the European civilian population in Tsingtao is largely living on direct or indirect Government expenditure, and that if all Government works suddenly ceased and the garrison were reduced to its normal level of 1,200 men, the condition of the "colonists" would soon be a parlous one. The Government, in other words, feeds every undertaking on a deliberate plan. The troops and the war-ships are supplied as far as possible locally, so that the local shop people and contractors may extract the fullest possible benefit from their temporary exile in this empire-germ. There are only three real merchant firms of any importance, and these are houses which have made the position they occupy in the Far East in British colonies or in British-controlled ports, and have only opened at Tsingtao because it may mean good busi-

ness later on, and because they can in any case afford to wait a number of years. The formidable lists of Tsingtao Government officials, and the huge staffs maintained at the navy and army dépôts alone, run into several hundreds of names. Every inducement is offered to time-expired men of the so-called Colonial army to settle in Tsingtao by making places for them in Government offices or securing positions for them in semi-Government enterprises. It is a wonderful experiment and far more successful than the Russian one in Manchuria, because, as I have already said, the German is infinitely more cautious and more calculating than his Eastern neighbour, and is working on a deliberate plan. But final success is still as far off as it was in Manchuria before the war.

The fates decreed that shortly after my arrival there should be a grand review on the parade ground in honour of a German general from Tientsien, who had come to inspect, when every man of the garrison and every sailor that could be spared from the war-ships in harbour would be mustered.

The sun rose gloriously and promised well for the ceremony. The Tsingtao parade-ground is beautifully situated beyond the town. The sea is but half a mile distant, for the coast, giving way suddenly, forms a deep and well-sheltered bay, along whose shores stretches a beautiful sandy beach such as is seldom found in China. Numbers of artistic bathing houses, painted all the colours of the rainbow, stand ready for the bathing season. Between

the beach and the parade-ground is a splendid summer hotel, whose breezy situation and generous proportions have already made it famous over half China as a piece of desirable non-China. Round the parade-ground and leading far out into the country, stretch well-made military roads, which, winding over the shoulders of hills and up and down rising ground, make strangely picturesque serpent-tracings on the darker background of the barren country. Afforestation is some day to convert the Tsingtao hills into wooded land; but for the time being the country is clean and cold-looking, and because of its scant vegetation cursed with a biting dust which rises jubilantly in blinding clouds on the slightest provocation.

Parade-day found all Tsingtao winding its way out to these country scenes. Carriages, rickshaws, and strange-looking cavaliers poured out, and by eleven o'clock a mixed German and Chinese crowd — for the Chinaman is invited cordially to look at the protecting soldiery — stood massed near the saluting point, whilst on the farther side of the parade-ground the troops and sailors were drawn up in close formation. A band was also gaily playing, for chief amongst all its attractions Tsingtao boasts of the best music in the Far East.

Presently the march-past commenced, and the crowd, despising the policemen, pushed forward with an utter lack of the German decorum which one expected. It had been amusing, in the first instance, to watch the efforts of the Berlin-made

policemen officiously attempting to stem the civilian advance. But the Far East is too much for even the strictest militarism in the world; and the military-looking police, met with pointed chaff, collapsed and resigned themselves to the inevitable, which meant being squashed into the march-past.

This march-past, with drum and fife fiercely playing, was not as impressive as it should have been. Excepting the special East Asiatic regiment, no corps looked very smart or soldierly; but the mounted infantry companies were at least somewhat workmanlike. The famous Tsingtao Sea-battalion provoked even laughter by its indifferent rifle-shouldering, and by the time the saluting-point was reached, the men's legs were visibly broken by the too vigorous goose-stepping. The Sea-battalion, however, was excused, as most of the men are detached in civilian employ so as to save the German taxpayer; but several of the other corps showed signs that discipline suffers inevitably in Eastern countries. As the units were being marched off it was amusing to hear the way the men in the ranks broke out into talking. Acute observers in North China, who were there during the Waldersee Expedition, have already remarked on the fact that the famous German discipline is only skin-deep, and that of real discipline there is very little. It is one of the myths religiously believed in in Europe that the German soldier has the best discipline in the world. It is true that their military organisation and drill are perfect, but no British soldier would

dare to answer his non-commissioned officers in the way every German soldier is willing to do if he does not happen to feel good-tempered. For half a mile home I listened to the sharp orders for silence snarled out by company officers, but in spite of this a constant sound of voices rose from the ranks, marked sometimes by laughter.

The Chinese companies which were enlisted here, in imitation of the Chinese regiment at Weihaiwei, have now entirely disappeared, and are not going to be experimented with again, at least for some time. In 1900 they began to get restive at the first signs of the Boxer revolt. They were heavily stiffened with German non-commissioned officers, and disciplined by being paraded inside of hollow squares when the military executions of so-called Boxers were made; but it was all in vain. One day the Chinese companies deserted *en masse*, nailing a list of their grievances to their barrack doors, and from this day German officialdom has not smiled on the idea of Chinese regiments. How different a story it was at British Weihaiwei, only a couple of hundred miles round the other corner of Shantung. There, in 1900, the commandant ordered the first Chinese regiment to be at once paraded when trouble was heard of, explained to the men most carefully the whole position, and asked all those whose consciences did not permit them to remain and fight their own countrymen to step forward fearlessly as they would at once receive their discharges. Only two or three obeyed the summons,

owing, as they said, to special circumstances which would make their villages suffer terribly unless they went back. The rest remained true to their salt. The simple narrative of the Chinese regiment during 1900, which has been published, will have shown how much can be effected by Englishmen with the Chinese if they are only left to themselves, and are unhampered by palsied British diplomacy.

With these thoughts in my head, I engaged in conversation with one of the tall Shantung policemen, who, armed with a truncheon, perform the policing of most of the streets under the fatherly eye of German officialdom. My man confessed that things were much better now than they had been in the beginning, and that German ideas had been greatly changed by the seven years' experience at Tsingtao. But he added that it was still far too strict, although orders to conciliate everybody had been most directly given. Everybody was still saying the same things about the Germans.

A year ago the agent of one of the biggest steel-tool concerns in Alsace-Lorraine, who had been in Port Arthur and Harbin booking large orders, told me that he had received instructions to investigate what prospects there were for establishing a Far Eastern factory. So he had gone to Tsingtao and interviewed the Governor. The Governor had warmly welcomed him and had pointed out that Tsingtao was the ideal spot for the founding of such an enterprise as the agent had in view. It was a free port; it was situated directly in the middle of

the Far East, and could supply not only China, but Manchuria, Korea, Eastern Siberia, and even Japan with tools. And then the Governor had added that German labour could be obtained here very cheaply. All the time-expired men of the Colonial troops could be induced to stay, or even made to stay here; for the Government would give them very attractive conditions in order to have such a reserve force on the spot. The agent, who was an astute Hebrew, smiled and remarked that the idea was worth thinking about; but since then he has been going about asking how, in Heaven's name, a factory manned by white men could ever pay in an Eastern country.

The German Government has, therefore, yet to learn that white labour is absolutely impossible where the population is other than European. At best, the European can play at overseeing in the East, and will be controlled entirely by the men he thinks he is ruling. Until the Kaiser's Government realises all this, its plans will continue to be illusory; but once it has realised this, the idea of a military-controlled Colony will have been so modified that there will be but little left on which to build the hopes which now animate a people who are mere beginners in the handling of Eastern problems.

CHAPTER XV

THE COLONY OF KIACHOW AND THE GERMAN PROGRAMME

In the autumn of 1897 two German missionaries belonging to the mission of Bishop Anzer (a German priest of the Church militant, who would confound the earthly with the heavenly to serve his Government) were foully murdered in the province of Shantung. Bishop Anzer conferred with Baron von Heyking, the German Minister in Peking. Baron von Heyking had his instructions immediately telegraphed from Berlin, ordering him to press for the fullest and most exacting reparations on the part of China and to be satisfied with nothing. (All this was shown in the archives of the old Tsung-li Yamen, investigated by inquisitive eyes in 1900.) On the 14th November of the same year a German squadron suddenly put into Kiaochow Bay, landed a strong detachment of sailors, and hoisted the German flag. On the 6th March, 1898, the Kiaochow Convention, with its supplementary railway and mining concessions, was signed in Peking, and Germany by a display of force had driven her first

wedge into the decaying Chinese structure. This is the first outward aspect of the Kiaochow affair.

The five articles of the Chino-German Convention contain the usual stipulations. Article 1st states that the Emperor of China, being apparently desirous of preserving peace with the German Emperor, and of promoting German power and influence in the Far East, sanctions the acquirement under a lease-form of one hundred li of land at Kiaochow. Article 2nd fixes the leasing period for a term of ninety-nine years, and gives Germany the right to erect forts and to build dockyards so as to promote the interests of her newly acquired coaling-station. Article 3rd defines the exact boundaries. Article 4th deals with lighthouses and beacons and the dues which may be collected on all vessels for their maintenance; and, finally, Article 5th contains *inter alia* the procedure to be adopted in the very hypothetical case of Germany deciding to give up her lease before the expiry of the said ninety-nine years. The cautious Teuton thus made every arrangement to wriggle out, should he be forced to do so by events.

Continuing in the same strain, the four articles of the railway and mining concession, which is an appendix to the Murder Convention, concede everything to Germany which she can possibly think of — the main railway line to the capital of Shantung with certain branch lines being the most important concession — and leave China in a most ridiculous and helpless position. Indeed, the whole of the text of the four articles is taken up with defining the

Shantung railway and mining monopoly in such a manner that no one could possibly think of tampering with Shantung under pain of incurring Germany's most Imperial displeasure; for the concluding paragraph of the final article states explicitly that "if at any time the Chinese should form schemes for the development of Shantung, for the execution of which it is necessary to obtain foreign capital, the Chinese Government, or whatever Chinese may be interested in such schemes, shall, in the first instance, apply to German capitalists." Only when neither the German Government nor German capitalists will look at a scheme is China graciously permitted to do as she pleases in her own territory; and thus no loophole is left to an unfortunate mandarinate to meet intrigue with the counter-intrigue in which the East so excels.

Thus, within half-a-year of the opportune deaths of the two missionaries, Germany had succeeded in making China pay the heaviest price ever demanded by a foreign Power in the Far East for the class of unfortunate incident which will continue to arise so long as unwise missionaries irritate the inhabitants of the country by their importunities.

The German action, however, although the Chinese Convention shows no trace of it, was not brought to a successful conclusion without considerable risk and worry. For a variety of reasons everybody in the Far East was very much upset by the new departure; but once it had become clear that England was really a negligible quantity — as

the Port Arthur incident soon actually showed — the rest was not very hard to arrange. But to see things in their proper light it is necessary to digress a little and show the German attitude regarding things which are equally important.

In 1895 the Japanese war had ended. In April of that year Japan had demanded and obtained from China the cession of the Liaotung peninsula. A month later, Russia, France, and Germany, by a display of force and a peremptory Note, had induced Japan to retrocede this territory. Japan had turned to England in her distress, but the British Ministry had quite rightly refused to support the Japanese action in Manchuria, perhaps mainly because the important port of Newchwang, opened by British treaty and entirely controlled by Englishmen and British commerce, was included in the ceded Liaotung districts. Japan, thus isolated, was powerless, and was forced to give way unconditionally. For more than a year after these important events nothing much was heard of. Japan was occupied in withdrawing her troops; China was attempting to rearrange her disorganised affairs.

Then in the autumn of 1896 the world was startled by the publication of the Cassini Convention. It is necessary to discuss here this greatly debated instrument which is in every way the master-document of all the wonderful series of protocols, treaties, conventions, and concessions which succeeded one another with such rapidity in the years after the Japanese war, and completely

altered the balance of power in the Far East. I have already elsewhere expressed the opinion that the question of whether the Cassini Convention was signed, sealed, and delivered, or whether, on the other hand, it was merely a Memorandum filed with the Chinese Government in proof-form in order to secure certain rights of pre-emption when the time was ripe for action, is really in itself unimportant. And in any case this convention was never ratified. The important part is undoubtedly the fact that China did consider herself under certain obligations to the chief Power of the triplicate which obtained the restoration of the ceded Liaotung territory; and that, although she was not prepared to say how far she would go in the matter of repayment, she allowed it to be clearly understood that in the event of certain eventualities arising she would make good all claims lodged against her. The Cassini Convention, therefore, denounced by both parties on account of its premature publication, was shelved for the time being, and the Muscovite diplomatists exhausted their inexhaustible ingenuity in devising new documents which, whilst not so sweeping in their provisions, would give effect to the most important clauses of the Cassini Memorandum in a somewhat different way (*vide* the Russo-Chinese Manchurian Railway Agreement of September, 1896, and its secret clauses).

So far as the German action at Kiaochow was concerned, the Cassini Convention had the highest importance. If the convention was at heart re-

garded by the two high contracting parties as a *bonâ fide* instrument, then Germany would find herself immediately in opposition to Russia. If, on the other hand, it was a mere trial-balloon, a compact might still be arranged which would have the highest importance in the future. So the German men-of-war steamed bravely enough into Kiaochow Bay and awaited the upshot of it all.

But it has not yet been explained in what manner the German programme clashed with the Russian; and as very few people carry treaty provisions concerning Far Eastern affairs in their heads, it is necessary to quote *in extenso* paragraph 9 of His Excellency Cassini's Peking proposals. The passage runs:

"Russia has never possessed a sea-port in Asia which is free from ice and open all the year round. If, therefore, there should suddenly arise military operations in this Continent, it will naturally be difficult for the Russian Eastern seas and Pacific fleets to move about freely and at pleasure. As China is well aware of this, she is willing to lease temporarily to Russia the port of Kiaochow, in the province of Shantung, the period of such lease being fifteen years. At the end of this period China shall buy back all the barracks, godowns, machine-shops, and docks built by Russia during her occupation of the said port. But should there be no danger of military operations, Russia shall not enter immediately into possession of the said post in order to obviate the chance of exciting the

jealousy and suspicion of the other Powers. With reference to the amount of rent and the way it is to be paid, this shall form the subject of consideration in another protocol at some future date."

This remarkable paragraph has been too little noticed by students of the Far Eastern imbroglio; for in this clause may be found the root of the present Russo-German *entente* in the Far East, and it may lead in the future to some little-expected developments.

Surveying the whole Cassini document, we find that the eight opening paragraphs deal entirely with Russian privileges in the matter of the Manchurian railway. We find also that Russia's original idea was far short of what has been executed. Ultimately Russia made Vladivostock in the extreme East, and Port Arthur in the extreme South, the main objectives by following the straightest possible route, *i.e.* by building the trans-Manchurian and Central Manchurian lines as they to-day stand. But the first project was merely to secure the right of financing and building the lines which China had already planned from Shanhaikwan *viâ* Newchwang to Moukden, and from Moukden to Kirin. To these was to be added a purely Russian[1] section and a branch[2] which would meet the Chinese lines at Kirin, and thus make Kirin Manchuria's provincial capital, the Harbin of the country. In other words, Russia was in the first instance prepared to build, or

[1] Vladivostock–Hungchun–Kirin.
[2] Stretensk–Aigun–Tsitsihan–Kirin.

help China to build, the railways she needed in Manchuria in the way China desired to construct them; and was content merely to connect trans-Baikalia and the Pacific province by short lines with her own system — the great Siberian railway. This explains and makes clear the purport of paragraph 9 above quoted, and of paragraphs 10 and 11 which, following the Kiaochow clause, deal with Port Arthur and Talienwan. Kiaochow was to have been the main Russian naval base in the China seas, with Port Arthur and Talienwan re-fortified as purely Chinese places under Russian protection — it being always supposed that China was to be henceforth the bosom ally of the Empire of Muscovy.

Previous to the entry of German warships into Kiaochow Bay in November, 1897, it is on clear record that two Russian squadrons visited these waters; but, finding that the anchorage was bad and that there was nothing of importance in the vicinity, they are stated to have reported unfavourably on this harbour and thus delayed Russian action. A mere chance may therefore be said to have determined that Germany and not Russia should be in the leased territory of Kiaochow to-day — a chance which may one day sway down the scales in the East.

When Germany suddenly put landing-parties on shore and hoisted her flag over the Bay, the Russians were not only completely taken by surprise, as indeed they often are, but in addition they were very much enraged. For, in the first instance, Kiao-

chow in lower Shantung was chosen by Russia not so much to escape the ice-blocked coasts of lower Liaotung as in order to have a base giving out on to the open seas, *i.e.* the Yellow Sea, far from the shut-in gulfs of Pechili and Korea, and with no convenient island-groups near by offering temporary bases to an enemy. In other words, on paper Russia had arrived at the conclusion (for a short time at least) that her sea-power must exist independently of her land-power, and that she would be taking the first step towards that consummation by having a naval base as detached from all home support, as, for instance, Hongkong is from England. This is a not uninteresting point. The very laxity with which the Cassini Convention was drawn up — in language expressing the general desires of the St. Petersburg Foreign Office rather than a cut-and-dried plan which would be inflexibly put into execution when the time arrived — was possibly responsible for the fact that one of the first goals, an absolutely ice-free port giving on to the open sea, was somewhat lost sight of; and perhaps for this reason, when the uproar caused by the publication of the whole instrument had subsided, the Manchurian Railway Convention,[1] dealing only with the trans-Baikal to Vladivostock railway, was substituted. As usual, Russian procrastination had had its inevitable result, and the St. Petersburg bureaucrats woke up one fine morning in November to find that Germany had quietly forestalled them at Kiaochow before they had been able

[1] *i.e.* The Russo-Chinese Bank agreement of September, 1896.

to make up their own minds whether the Shantung port could or could not be converted into a first-class naval base; and they perceived Germany would probably not retreat. For the explanation which follows I am partly indebted to Prince Henry of Prussia, who was pleased to tell the story in a German Club during his excursion to the East six years ago.

The first impulse of the Russians was to warn Germany peremptorily that unless she promptly evacuated Kiaochow unfortunate results might take place. But Russians seldom yield to first impulses, knowing how bad is the judgment of emotional natures. Instead of this, Russia instructed China to block the negotiations with Germany which were then taking place (they continued for twelve weeks at Peking before the lease was signed), but to be careful not to bring about a rupture. Meanwhile in Europe the Czar's Ministers addressed a series of Notes couched in a sharp tone of remonstrance to the German Government, notes which must have been marvels of ingenuity, seeing that Russia had openly disavowed the entire transactions of Count Cassini, and could not therefore calmly turn round and claim that Kiaochow was Russian — at least so far as a definite agreement with the Chinese Government was concerned. It was when things were in this stage that one of those memorable meetings between Kaiser and Czar took place. The German Emperor, well posted on Far Eastern affairs as he is on every question of the day, is credited with having brought the whole matter to a success-

ful conclusion in one long afternoon's talk, and in turning all danger of a conflict with Russia over this question into a close understanding, the results of which may to-day be seen. What the exact nature of the arrangements made were, it would be presumptuous to state; but a study of events, documents, and dates allows one to arrive at a reasonable conclusion. The occupation of Port Arthur by an insignificant fleet of Russian warships, following soon after the landing of the German detachment at Kiaochow, shows that Germany must have said in simple language to Russia: — "We occupied Kiaochow because we desired reparation and a coaling-station. We understood that the Cassini Convention was simply a *ballon d'essai* and not a permanent arrangement. A year and more had passed since its publication and denouncement, and you took no steps to carry out its main provisions. Therefore we were forced to the conclusion that you had reconsidered your position. It is perhaps best so. For we cannot and do not intend to retreat; we have important interests in the Far East which must be consolidated, and until those interests are consolidated it will be in vain for you, a single Power, to attempt to combat the one country which monopolises Far Eastern commerce and which can therefore still influence all against you. We must combine. Russia's true objectives are ice-free ports connected by rail with her own territory. Your strength is in your many millions, and your strength must be shown more on land than on sea. Take

A Tsingtao Review.

The Governor of Shantung being entertained at Tsingtao.

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the end of the Liaotung peninsula; connect Port Arthur and Talienwan with your trans-Manchurian, Baikal-Vladivostock railway by the straightest possible route, and you will be in a position you could never hope to occupy by seizing a detached base such as Kiaochow."

A comparison of the Kiaochow Leasing Convention signed on the 6th March, 1898, and the Port Arthur and Talienwan Convention signed 27th March of the same year, makes the logic of what has been written unanswerable. The substitution in the Russian leasing agreement of a vigorous and definite language in place of the vague and irresolute phrasing of the Cassini instrument must be directly attributed to German influence and to the use of German models; and the manner in which the Manchurian railways became purely strategic lines going straight to their true objectives is very enlightening. But most important of all, the new idea of leasing territory must be set down as a purely German idea — a manifestation of the policy of the Mailed Fist. An extension of the English principle (adopted in China for purely commercial reasons) of Settlements or Concessions where the rights of extra-territoriality are exercised, it makes the leased territory virtually become part and parcel of the lessee Power's own dominions. The Russians had previously only demanded "to share" territory with Eastern Powers, and in this connection instances will be given later on. The ninety-nine years' lease is purely German, and far too definite and business-like for Russians.

So that there should be no mistake about the new German attitude, and that the full importance of the move should be given and realised all over the world, the Kaiser's naval brother, Prince Henry of Prussia, set sail for China at the head of a strong squadron and, arriving in Shanghai in April, 1898, proceeded at once to Peking, where he was accorded a personal interview with the Emperor of China. This closed the first chapter of the German expansionist movement in the Far East, and discloses beyond a doubt how the Russian advance was intended to synchronise with the German advance — both of which were to spell ultimately the destruction of the British position east of Singapore and the forcing of Japan into an attitude more adapted to the ambitions of Continental Powers.

Turning now to a direct consideration of the colony of Kiaochow, it must be conceded that much has been done in the seven years which have elapsed since the German squadron steamed into the Bay and planted the Kaiser's colours. At a total expenditure of some eighty million marks, or £4,000,000, an inner harbour has been constructed and the work on the main harbour much advanced; five formidable forts have been completed and the building of seven others commenced; machine shops and military dépôts erected in large numbers; barracks built capable of housing 5,000 men; and slowly, methodically, and with infinite caution, observed (in the curious words of the Cassini Convention dealing with this place) "to obviate the chance

of exciting the jealousy and suspicion of other Powers," the present garrison has been raised to over 3,000 men in place of the former 600 men of the *See battalion.* And in two years this garrison will be increased to 5,000 men; and within a decade from now it will be the most strongly held and the best-fortified place owned by any European Power in the Far East. In addition to this, these four million sterling have already allowed a model town to be built up, a town which, if it has not all the commercial activity which could be desired, is still the best-built in China. The Germans are thus not making the mistake of separating the commercial and the military from one another as the Russians did with Port Arthur and Dalny. Both are merged into one powerful whole.

So little was known about this corner of Shantung that Kiaochow, which is a native city nearly two score miles higher up the Bay, was the name under which the present colony was generally known all over the Far East for some years. Lately, however, the increasing importance of the place has allowed the German name of the town (which is the incorrect transliteration of the Chinese characters Ch'ing Tao) to be substituted, and therefore Tsingtao is the name of the port, and Kiaochow that of the whole leased territory belonging to the colony. In September, 1898, the port was made a free port, and Sir Robert Hart's Custom House now functions here in the same way as it does at Hongkong — that is, merely as a convenience to merchants, whose imports

and exports all either go to or come from the Chinese hinterland, and are therefore liable to a duty-levy which can be more easily dealt with at the time of discharge or shipment (as the case may be) than when the Chinese land-frontier is passed.

As has already been stated, this town of Tsingtao, on which part of the Berlin millions have been spent, is excellently well laid out. The streets are broad and admirable, and provided with sidewalks of noble dimensions. Electricity lights all the town, and a complete water-supply system has been installed. There are good hotels and passable shops, a splendid parade ground and fine military roads darting everywhere into the country. Tsingtao is an unique creation in the Far East, for whereas all other places, except where the Russian has been, have grown up to their present importance owing to a prolific commerce between Europeans and Chinese (witness Hongkong and the big British-opened treaty ports of Shanghai, Hankow, and Tientsien), Tsingtao is purely artificial, and is intent on creating a trade which will be for many decades a somewhat unnatural one, and only possible because a Government and "Colonists" have disbursed large sums of money raised in Berlin, and are continuing to do so on an ever increasing scale. The budget of Kiaochow Colony is proof of that.

In 1904 the total estimate was 13,088,300 marks, or, say, £650,000 sterling, of which the Imperial German Treasury contributed 12,583,000 marks, and the Colony's own revenues only 505,300 marks.

For the year 1905, the total estimate is 15,296,000 marks, or an increase of over £100,000 on the previous year, towards which the colony's own revenues only contribute a total of 636,000 marks. Divided into an ordinary and an extraordinary expenditure, calculations show that the colony's revenue, raised by local taxation, amounts only to slightly over 10 per cent. of the ordinary disbursements; while the extraordinary expenditure, which for 1905 is nearly half a million sterling, and has been growing steadily larger and larger every year, shows that, as this so-called extraordinary budget will be really a recurring expenditure for many years to come, even the most optimistic empire-builders in Germany's capital cannot hope that the colony will become self-supporting whilst the present generation of strenuous colonists lives. Indeed it seems probable that the colony can never be self-supporting.

But the extraordinary budget tells its own story in figures more eloquently than any writing could do. The harbour works take 3,473,000 marks; other public works, 1,964,000 marks; dwelling houses, 100,000 marks; afforestation, 80,000 marks; lighthouses, 40,000 marks; fortifications, 2,500,000 marks; the floating dock, 1,100,000 marks. The fortifications, the harbour, and the dock will not be finished for many years to come. And at the same time the ordinary expenditure is a further argument. Civil administration is 1,101,693 marks; military administration 2,711,897 marks; and joint

expenses (the meaning of this is not explained) amounts to 2,192,531 marks. This critical examination establishes two facts: that a splendidly built and carefully protected harbour with floating and granite docks is to be the seed which will slowly expand into a beautiful Imperial tree on which you may hang an Eastern world-policy of a most astonishing character; and secondly, that an immensely strong system of fortification will, within ten years, make Tsingtao a fortress more secure from attack than Port Arthur, because there will be no cramping and want of space. By the end of 1905 nearly one hundred million marks, or five millions sterling, will have been expended on Tsingtao; by 1915 or 1916, when the German naval programme will have been completed and the Kaiser's Navy will dispose of forty modern battleships and a host of powerful cruisers, Tsingtao will have swallowed up fifteen millions sterling and be in a position to justify its existence as a first-class fortress and a far better protected naval base than ever was Port Arthur — for whose birth it was responsible.

But in order to insure that the paternal Berlin Government shall be recouped as much as possible for the colossal expenditure it is deliberately undertaking, the colonists (as they are pleased to call themselves) are to contribute increased taxes as the value of their holdings in real estate and other immovable property appreciates owing to the "betterments" in harbour works, wharfing

accommodation, railway building, etc., introduced by either the Government or by semi-Government undertakings. Thus a system of unearned increments is already in force which provides for a periodic and rigid re-assessment of all property — the rate of taxation on the artificially inflated value of rentals being extremely heavy. In this way, and with the help of mine-earnings and railway earnings, which of course will contribute, the paternal Government really hopes at some distant date to make Tsingtao self-supporting — a hope which, if the present feeling among the "colonists" is any index of the future, would appear to be an optimism only entertained to allay the apprehensions of the German socialists and their energetic leader, Herr Bebel.

But it must be remembered that Tsingtao and the Kiaochow Colony are but the first links in a great chain, links that are being forged now whilst others more essential are left untouched, because metal has first been taken from the place of least resistance — which at the present stage of the world's history is China. From Kiaochow the peaceful campaign against China can be very conveniently directed. Already the railway to the Shantung provincial capital — a railway of more than 400 kilometres — has been completed and is in first-class working order; already two coal-mines are turning out coal in increasing quantities, and other mines are being opened up. In the summer of 1904 I met German engineers at Kaifengfu who had com-

pleted the survey from Chinanfu to the Honan capital — a distance of 400 kilometres — and who were leaving for home and not coming back "until the Russians had beaten or exhausted the Japanese." In Tientsien it was the same story — the survey of the Tientsien-Chinanfu railway completed, and being already pushed down far south into Kiangsu province on the way to the Yangtsze. Nor is this all. The Germans have surveyed the Chefoo-Laichoufu districts and are quite prepared to link them up with Tsingtao, in the hope that such a course would kill Chefoo and its importance to British trade, and drive all traffic and commerce to the Kaiser-port. Not only this, but it is well known in all circles in North China that a determined attempt had been going on for many months to secure the reversion of the entire Tientsien to Chinkiang trunk line, which will connect the Yangtsze with North China *viâ* the Shantung provincial capital. This, according to the insane arrangement of 1898, entered into before German plans in the Far East were properly understood, was to be a joint Anglo-German venture, the northern half being built by Germans and the southern or Yangtsze section by the British. The year 1900 gave this venture the cold douche, and the Bagdad railway affair was the death-blow; since then, joint Anglo-German negotiations have been practically suspended, whilst the Germans have been independently plotting and planning to secure the whole line. That is why the surveys have already been carried out. What with the

Anglo-German Salisbury Convention, which insists on the open-door in China being kept open so that Germany may slip in when she is ready and slam it behind her; the half-assurance the Germans obtained from the Chinese before evacuating Shanghai, that the Yangtsze would never be alienated to a foreign Power without first consulting them; the German official declaration that the Salisbury arrangement had nothing to do with Manchuria; the speech-making of youthful Kaiser's sons at Hankow made indiscreet by dining; and the constant utterances of the Berlin-led Press; — all signs make it quite clear that Germany not only hopes to succeed England in China, but is bent on a forcible attempt if such a proceeding is possible. Until this cardinal point is thoroughly realised and always insisted on, English statesmen will be unable to understand how it is that influences are being constantly brought to bear which have an adverse effect on British reputation, whilst on the surface all are protesting that they are quite friendly and that this is the day of gentle arbitrations.

But more must be said. Downing Street has gone out of its way to promise the Berlin Foreign Office most faithfully that we will never link up Weihaiwei with any Chinese railway system, and that we entirely acknowledge German rights in Shantung. It has never been made clear what reasons existed for making either of these statements, and it seems impossible to reconcile loud proclamations of the vaunted open-door policy in

China — which means the eighteen provinces, Manchuria, Mongolia, and the New Dominion — with private admissions made the next moment to a European Power that we are going to further, to the best of our ability, the promotion of disintegrating schemes. It is small wonder that at the present moment the Chinese Government and all high Chinese officials of weight such as Yuan Shih-kai, utterly distrust the British Government and resent the manner in which we efface ourselves when we might be of great help; and this fact in a few years will seriously undermine the extraordinarily high position that British merchantdom occupies in the Far East, and will weaken the powerful hold that Anglo-Chinese interests have on the whole Empire.

Turning from an immediate consideration of Shantung and North China, much the same state of affairs is found to-day in the Yangtsze valley. The Germans are everywhere asserting themselves, not in legitimate ways, and are attempting to secure for themselves a position which neither their commerce nor their international dealings justify. The question which arose when the evacuation of Shanghai by the temporary garrisons of 1900 was completed is so recent that it will be still fresh in people's minds. The sublime pretensions then exhibited excited general admiration if nothing else. That a Power which a decade ago was practically unknown in the Far East, whose commerce even to-day amounts to only a sixth of England's in China, and whose interests in Shanghai were at most a few per

cent. compared to British interests, should defy England as she was defied, is without doubt a proceeding which would not have been tolerated by any other great nation. If no redress was then possible, owing to South Africa, the score should have been written up on the wall for immediate reference when the time was propitious for remembering. But although the Germans were forced to raze the semi-permanent barracks they had erected in Shanghai, they have not hesitated commencing the construction of a great German Post Office in the English settlement of the same treaty port, from whence will be directed the postal campaign whose only object is not to facilitate letter-carrying — for the Chinese Imperial Post attends to that with increasing success — but simply to promote German influence by opening offices all over China, which not only complicate matters generally but defraud the Chinese administration of revenues which should be available for improving internal communications. At Tsingtao the German railway has not hesitated to equip Imperial German postal cars, which travel up to Chinanfu, and, by linking the line of German Post Offices, extended along the German railway, with the German colony, aim thus to secure the carrying of all correspondence, native and foreign. So confident did the German postal authorities become a short time ago that they began a rate-cutting competition against the Chinese Post Office, which is a very new development. It has been left until now for a foreign Power to go into

business against the Government of a so-called friendly country in its own territory with the object of annexing internal revenue. But Sir Robert Hart responded after the manner of the rate-cutting on the Atlantic: all the native postal agency bags were carried for nothing, and the cautious German was not prepared to lose money deliberately by offering a premium.

Thus nothing is too small or too petty for a convincing *welt-politik*. Not content with being defeated over the Shanghai garrison question, the petty postal question, and numerous other little matters too trifling to be mentioned, the Imperialists raised trouble again over the conservancy of the Huang-pu, which is Shanghai's fast-silting mud river. The peace protocol of 1901, in one of its numerous annexes which have all proved as fatuous as the mighty protocol itself, lays down the exact procedure to be adopted for the formation of a local Conservancy Board. The provisions showed on a rough calculation that England with her friends and allies would be able to out-vote the Continent of Europe, which is so solid against Anglo-Saxondom in the Far East. Intrigue with the Nanking Viceroy succeeded in blocking the whole scheme, and whilst months have grown into years the German Government, in conjunction with certain German commercial houses, has evolved a scheme of its own, and is still hoping that it may be given the whole undertaking, alleging that it will do the work cheaper than anybody else. Fortunately the

German plan of campaign is well understood by now in China, and steps have already been taken to render all such intriguing abortive. But the persistence of these various attempts is so remarkable that it is high time that Europe should know what is continually going on *sub rosa* in China.

And on the middle Yangtsze it is much the same story as in the Yangtsze delta — a constant tale of deliberate, consistent pushing forward in any possible way. No method is too mean, nothing is too small for the Berlin-Hamburg wire-pullers. One day German gunboats, whose numbers are constantly increasing, steam into the Poyang Lake below Kiukiang and carry out their firing practices. The Chinese authorities protest, the Germans protest back, then steam off the lake into the great river and the incident is temporarily forgotten. But the Germans have thus established a right to go into the Poyang Lake, for they have a precedent, and in the East all is based on precedent. At Hankow they have a large concession which they are rapidly covering with handsome structures; they are still drilling foolish Chang Chih-tung's troops on the Wuchang parade grounds; they have strong hopes that Chinkiang may one day be wholly German owing to the German ownership of the Tientsien trunk-line; at Nanking they are making exceptional demands and wish for an exclusive Settlement; and thus from Shanghai to Hankow they have contrived to make themselves prominent in some way or other, and to establish equal

rights (as they think) with England in the heart of her so-called sphere of influence.

It is a long way back from where we have travelled to Tsingtao and purely German territory; but it is a voyage which will be easily accomplished by the German railway if things are allowed to continue as they are still going in spite of the war. For the German programme is as clear as the light of day. In a few years another naval base somewhere in the region of Swatow will be required, and then, linked by a system of German railways, a huge slice of Northern, Central, and Southern China will be practically ruled from Berlin. It may seem nebulous and vague to those who sit in the darkness of blissful ignorance far away, but it is patent to those whose business it is to follow audacious Empire plans. Tientsien will mark the extreme Northern limit of these ambitions; Kaifengfu the North-western; Hankow the Central West; and Swatow the extreme South. Including, therefore, great portions of nine or ten provinces of China, the German programme is so framed that it clashes directly with no other Power in the world excepting England. Even Japan could be satisfied with slices of Fuhkien and Chehkiang provinces; the Russian and French programmes would be aided and abetted by the success of the German programme; and lastly America might be bought off by the prospect of not having the Monroe doctrine even challenged until her natural growth would render such a policy suicidal for any power to undertake. Thus argues

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LOADING IN THE TSINGTAO HARBOUR.

the patient German very quietly to himself. He knows exactly what he wants. Asked by a French gunboat captain at Hankow why the Germans did not pay more attention to the upper Yangtsze and send their gunboats thither as the British and French have been doing, a German naval officer, whose name is of no importance, answered, "This, Hankow, is our limit. Beyond it, it is for you French to settle with the English." At Swatow the Java-Sumatra coolie trade is entirely in German hands. The future of Java and Sumatra is itself no certain one, and these may be two of the links which, united to the Chinese ones, may entirely change Germany's standing as a colonial Power.

And yet with all this intrigue and ambition, no examination of German trade and shipping discloses a justification for the vast programme which has been dealt with hurriedly above. That both have expanded is beyond controversy; but it must always be borne in mind that Germany could not, after the Franco-Prussian war and her re-incarnation in Empire form, depend on rival nations for all her brokering and carrier operations. In the 'eighties the German flag began to be noticed in the Far East; in the 'nineties mail-contracts and the Kiaochow policy rapidly forced development in the shipping trade to its present level, which is undoubtedly, for the time being, the high-water mark of German Far Eastern prosperity until other things have been done elsewhere; and no material advance will now probably be seen for a number of years. In commercial

operations much the same thing is to be noticed. The big German houses began their business by establishing themselves at Hongkong and Shanghai and purchasing or selling in these markets indirectly as far as the rest of China was concerned. The movement which has been lately going on all over the rest of the world for direct trade (*i.e.* one transaction between buyer and seller conducted by the so-called middleman, acting as a commission agent who works for a minimum fee) in due course spread to China. German merchants, so-called, who were in reality degenerate commission-agents with the terrible Hamburg money-hunger, took up their residence at those treaty ports nearest their markets, and, financed direct from Germany by German banks, inaugurated direct commission trade with their own country. Yet it is to be seriously doubted whether this commerce has in any way affected British commerce; at most it may have slightly diminished the freight receipts of British shipping and caused the loss of commissions which were formerly earned in England for sale and transmission. But beyond this the so-called German advance at the expense of England, except in a political and moral sense, is wholly unworthy of the name. In 1903 nearly fifty per cent. of the total tonnage of vessels entered and cleared at the treaty ports of China was British, 17 per cent. Chinese, 13 per cent. Japanese, and only 12 per cent. German. And in trade, as will be shown later, British trade is six times as big as German trade. It would seem, therefore, that

England is the stumbling-block which trips the German up at every turn. And she has now committed a further offence. Not being content with her own position, she has allied herself with Japan, a country which, if enriched and developed by Anglo-Saxon loans, will be in a fair way to destroy the German Far Eastern trade in what is somewhat inelegantly called in trade parlance "muck and truck," *i.e.* the cheap miscellaneous goods which have been made famous in England by their ubiquitous trade-mark of inferiority.

Thus, not only is England the enemy, but Japan is equally so. From one end of China you will hear the same German execration forcibly expressed against the Japanese — the detested race which is upsetting all calculations, and which, after it has finished with the Russians — if Divine Providence is so cruel as to allow that consummation — will concentrate its attention on German action in China; will advertise every German move; undersell all Germany's cheap goods; destroy the German commission agent's starvation work by further rate-cutting; inform somnolent British officials of what is going on *sub rosa*, and shame them to action; make the Chinese Government realise that the time has come when retaliatory measures may be successfully adopted; and so on all down the gamut. The German, if he is sufficiently heated, will even step very close to you and ask you impressively whether white men should be divided on a subject which eventually will mean their ruin. If you rudely

laugh, the bitterness engendered will fling aside all masks, and you will be told that you are a traitor to white Europe, and that while you may continue to laugh for five or even ten years, in twenty years you will be secretly weeping and gnashing your teeth and staring stupidly at your ruined trade-empire; and that finally in the end it will be you, perfidious Albion, and no one else, who will be calling on Europe to arm and destroy the solid Asia to which your evil genius has given birth. All this makes a splendidly dramatic picture, and after hours of beer-drinking and more hours of argument — for the German is the greatest and most persistent bandier of words in the world — the convictions of the weak are somewhat shaken. But these vapours of words are intended only to numb you and disturb your judgment, for the German understands the present war as well as anybody.

Thus from the Kaiser-port of Tsingtao you may survey the German attitude and understand it thoroughly. Germany is hand-in-glove with Russia in the Far East to the death, in spite of any deceptive appearances. Every Russian defeat on the plains and hills of Manchuria is a German defeat; every Japanese success calls for more curses and imprecations. The *Czarewitch* officers have been put into Coventry at Tsingtao, not because they are cowards, but because they represent inexcusable failures. And of the great neutral Powers in the Far East it is not France who is the most bitter at the Russian collapse, but Germany, the

head of the Triple Alliance, who should rejoice, did not the Asiatic question bulk so large.

Meanwhile, whilst things are in this tangled condition, the Governor of the Kiaochow territory has gone home; telegraphs flash the news of his promotion to the rank of Rear-Admiral, the more fittingly to adorn the new Government House; Tsingtao is to have another Imperial granite dry-dock; a greater military expenditure is to be sanctioned for 1906; and the troops in North China are to be moved to Tsingtao if Tientsien and the surrounding posts are evacuated. Everything points to the fact that Germany is irrevocably pledged to her Far Eastern expansionist policy, but that the time for striking must now be delayed. There is yet time for counter-action. But unless that comes soon, and is sane, cool, persevering, and intelligent, although the German programme may be never completed in its entirety, there is still every prospect of the major portion being brought to fruition, to the detriment of the peace and well-being of the people of China.

CHAPTER XVI

ON THE GERMAN RAILWAY FROM TSINGTAO TO THE SHANTUNG CAPITAL

After the manner of Far Eastern trains the Tsingtao daily express leaves the station at the earliest possible hour so that the maximum amount of daylight may be available for the slow, methodical run, which may be tantalising, but which is the most economical for coal consumption. Excepting on the Manchurian railway no trains in China run during the night, as the time has not yet been reached when Chinese engine-drivers may be counted on to pay the careful attention which night work demands.

The Tsingtao station is a handsome, German-looking building, to which the architecture of the immensely patriotic port has already accustomed you. And under such circumstances it comes as no surprise that you buy your ticket not from the usual Chinese clerk, but from an uniformed German railway official. Germany evidently does not believe in the English Colonial policy, and one day she may have to pay dearly for the absurd

On the German Railway.

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Tsingtao Station.

manner in which Germans are foisted into positions which the natives of the country should be trained to occupy. The German railway fares likewise do not illustrate the principle of small profits and quick returns, for the charges on the Shantung railway are probably the heaviest in the Far East. Even from Port Arthur to Harbin, a run of over six hundred miles, was almost as cheap before the war as from Tsingtao to Chinanfu, though the distance in Manchuria is almost twice as great and the accommodation of the Russian trains far better. But then the German railway is a commercial undertaking — at least ostensibly, and has no ulterior motives; whilst the war has proved why the Russians built theirs.

There are but few passengers excepting Chinese in these German trains — for the "Colonists" are few and confined to Tsingtao, but the natives show by their numbers that rapid transit is the one thing China has been languishing for, and that once communication is good and cheap all over the Empire, the face of the country will change completely. Even from Tsingtao, which has yet to prove its usefulness, there were respectable numbers of Chinese going all the way through to Chinanfu — a distance of nearly three hundred miles — whilst still greater numbers were continually climbing up or jumping off as we drew in and out of wayside stations. The great majority of these travellers patronised the horse-box-shaped third-class carriages, in which you seat yourself, your bedding, and your

various bundles — of which latter category every Easterner has weird and impossible numbers — on the ground; but even in the second and first-class compartments were to be found rich Chinese merchants in their silks and satins, to whom money is no great consideration, travelling in ease and state and reading the latest news of the war in the Chinese equivalent of the *Daily Mail*. People are fond of dwelling on the way the Chinaman desires to earn money; but it has not been sufficiently observed that he is equally eager to spend it, for without doubt the Chinaman is the most free-fisted of all Asiatic peoples. The Japanese has been forced to have a French-like carefulness as to the manner in which he lays out every paper yen, but the Chinaman, on the other hand, as often as not throws his money about as freely and as foolishly as any Englishman or Russian.

The Tsingtao train speeds forward over an admirable rock bed. No pains have evidently been spared to make the line as excellent as possible, and running through a clean country with few engineering difficulties to overcome, the German company has concentrated all its efforts on getting the permanent way into that smooth and perfect condition which generally only comes after the lapse of years. Completed only six months ago, the line is already in a condition to bear the heaviest and most continuous traffic. Very different is it indeed from the Franco-Belgian undertaking from Hankow to Peking.

The little town of Tsingtao is soon left behind, but at the station Syfang, up to which the big harbour now under construction will extend, the real railway headquarters is reached. Here an immense piece of land is already covered with warehouses, sheds, and machine-shops, whilst between the countless tracks, which form immense spider-webs of steel, are great stacks of railway material. From the Syfang headquarters an invasion of all North China could be planned and possibly executed. Here have been already accumulated rails, ties, bolts, and fish-plates in sufficient quantities to make many extensions from the present Chinanfu terminus; and on the great Far Eastern war it depends whether German engineers will link up the capital of Shantung with Tientsien in the North and Kaifengfu in the West, and plan from these places extensions in other directions. A glance at the great harbour works now in progress and the accumulation of railway materials, is sufficient to show that Germany, at least, has committed herself so heavily that only the greatest pressure will force her to limit her activity in China to her Kiaochow colony, as she so loudly and constantly protests is her only intention. As in Manchuria, everything here is planned on the most noble scale, and everywhere there are evidences that a notable future is being thought of.

Beyond the two Syfang stations the country opens up, and the mountains and hills which seem to threaten you when you are in Tsingtao suddenly

disappear. Immense rolling fields of crops cover the land as far as the eye can reach, but the absence of trees in any number gives to the country the cold look of Northern Manchuria. Each station has a neat well-built structure of a very distinctive design as a main building, whilst, on the gravelled platform, posts, zebra-marked with red, white, and black, give notice to the world at large, and the Chinaman in particular, that Imperial Germany is really responsible for the whole undertaking, although the road belongs to a private company. Few Chinese, however, come down to look at the passing trains, and the stations are not gay with the bustle and disorder which characterise all other railways in China. It is as if the Chinaman is being drilled to an order that he cannot understand wherever the new German movement is taking place. The very villages are not thick on the horizon line as they are in Chihli, Honan, or Hupeh; they stand back out of sight as if unwilling to enter into any intimacy with the ruthless newcomer.

Not until kilometre 80 is reached does the city of Kioachow appear. It is very curious that the German colony should bear the name of a Chinese city which is in no wise connected with it; but such misnomers frequently happen in China. To take but one instance: Newchwang is not really Newchwang but Ying-Kou, for the town of the former name lies far inland from the Manchurian treaty port. And similarly, Kiaochow colony received its

name because it lies at the mouth of Kiaochow Bay, which is merely an immense silt-laden indenture on the Shantung coast. The city of Kiaochow is at the extreme end of this bay and far beyond the limits of German jurisdiction, although within the neutral zone in which China may not station any troops but still administers.

At Kiaochow city for the first time there was a fair crowd of Chinese, standing in that idleness which is dear to Eastern countries. There was evidence also that the railway is becoming a necessary factor in local life. Hawkers and vendors, without whom the Chinaman would languish, cry their wares and dispute with one another for the privilege of selling doubtful cigarettes, ill-smelling matches, and even good German beer, to all who loll their heads out of windows. But a rapid inspection proved that there is still but little goods traffic here. Compared with the rich Hankow-Peking line, the prospects of the German railway are poor; but still I am convinced that even the Shantung road will prove remarkably remunerative solely on account of the passenger traffic and the cheapness of operating railways in China. Slowly but surely the railway will pick every traveller from the road and boat all over China, — of this there is no doubt; and the sum total of these many millions travelling will do much to compensate for the absence of goods.

The train moved on, and once more we were sliding smoothly forward and secretly congratulating

the builders on their capacity for taking infinite pains. Tall *kao-liang* covers the country, sometimes fighting with *hsiao-mi* or the small millet for the first place, but always vanquishing its competitor after a few miles of struggle. The giant millet, providing as it does food for man and beast, although indescribably coarse, is the best-paying, and the cunning Chinese agriculturist has not yet reached the pitch when he can afford to pander to his own stomach. The stomachs of his beasts are infinitely more precious to him than his own; for if men die others can soon be made, whilst cattle and draft animals can often not become ancestors owing to causes which it is superfluous to specify. With nothing to do but to survey the horizon, it was time to turn to a frank little German volume entitled *Guide to Tsingtao and its Neighbourhood.*

Almost on the first page of this engaging little volume your attention is directed to the astounding fact that Tsingtao is most quickly reached by following the great Siberian railway. And for the following reasons: — Berlin is linked with St. Petersburg; St. Petersburg with Moscow; Moscow with Port Arthur and Dalny; Port Arthur with Chefoo, and finally Chefoo with Tsingtao. Providence has, therefore, as it were, created a special route along which all mankind may travel until Tsingtao is reached. It is curious how this mysterious Russo-German co-operation in the Far East is always cropping up, more especially since the war, and attracting your attention. Shantung is almost next

door to Manchuria, and were the German railway to obtain the concession to connect the Chinanfu line with Tientsien, the Berlin traveller could come all the way from Europe to his Chinese colony by rail without changes, excepting from standard gauge to Russian broad gauge and then back once more to the same. England and British capital alone stand in the way of this plan, and now that the Lansdowne-Hayashi agreement is already in fair way of accomplishing the first part of its programme, German irritation must know no bounds.

Farther on in this interesting little guide-book — an "open sesame" to Imperial secrets — there are some insignificant paragraphs under the legend "history." We are told that in January of the year 1897 a German expert in harbour-building and engineering was sent out to China by the Berlin Government, in response to a suggestion made in 1896 by the German Rear-Admiral on the China Station; and that as his report was favourable, the German Government made immediate overtures to the Chinese Government regarding a lease of Kiaochow Bay — overtures which were, however, rejected. It is enlightening to allow the *Guide* to continue the story in its own words.

"At this juncture an occurrence took place which brought about the realisation of the project. On the 1st November, 1897, three missionaries named Nies, Henle, and Stenz were attacked by thirty Chinese in a village named Chang-chia in the prefecture of Yen-chou. The first two were murdered,

the third escaped. After this Germany came to an understanding with the various Powers, but more especially with Russia, and on the 14th November, 1897, the cruiser division commanded by Admiral Diederichs occupied Tsingtao and Kiaochow Bay."

This is a surprisingly candid statement to be allowed in print by the German Government, and it is probable that the revised edition will not contain these remarks. For it will be remembered that the Cassini Convention, divulged in the autumn of 1896, mentioned Kiaochow as the first of the three ports which China was to lease to Russia. The premature publication of this Memorandum raised such an uproar that everybody concerned in its drafting denied its existence. But, invention or no invention, a document strangely resembling this one must have changed hands in Peking, and its contents must likewise have been well known to the German Government and the German Legation. How comes it, therefore, at a time when a Russian Squadron was furtively visiting Kiaochow Bay, as I have already shown, that the Germans were also feeling their way in the matter and seeking to acquire territory which Russia had apparently already expressed her intention of pre-empting? The true story of these leasing affairs will probably never be known outside the walls of the European Chancelleries responsible for their execution. But the fact seems to stand out that from the year 1895, in spite of a temporary *rapprochement* then with England in the Far East over the question of Chinese loans,

Germany has been acting consistently in accordance with some private understanding with Russia; and this explains why it was quite impossible for the Anglo-German Agreement of 1900 to include Manchuria within its terms without ruining the secret German programme. Many years must elapse, and many hard blows will have to be given and received, before Englishmen realise that once in Asia all Continentals at heart form a solid block whose object is to diminish British power. *Rapprochements* may be useful in European politics for the purpose of maintaining temporarily the balance of power; but such *rapprochements* never affect the expansionist programmes of the Great Powers of the Continent which, even in China alone, are committed too deeply to draw back except in the face of the most disastrous circumstances.

Amid such reflections the city of Kaumi — one of the most important Chinese towns along the entire line — rose up before me. Kaumi, which is surrounded by a formidable city wall, marks the limit of the German sphere of interest (*Interessenzone*), consisting of a fifty-kilometre belt extending round the whole of the territory actually leased on the ninety-nine years' lease. Kaumi marks kilometre 107 from the Tsingtao terminus on the railway map, and therefore it would be interesting to know under authority of what instrument Germany stations her troops so far inland. From the railway station a broad, well-metalled road leads to a permanent German encampment artfully concealed from view by some small

woods. Here is quartered a double company of mounted infantry belonging to the small colonial army which Germany has already managed to collect in China, in spite of Herr Bebel and his Socialists. The captain in command of this detachment (*Aufklärungs-detachment*) is a jocular fellow who bears the significant nickname of the King of Kaumi, and his command roams far into the country engaged in manœuvres which succeed in leaving the impression on all Chinese that it is a mere question of time as to when the German flag is to be hoisted definitely here. I direct the attention of those who take any interest in the welfare of China to this Kaumi mounted detachment which has established itself fifty kilometres beyond the German colony, and which has driven away Chinese Yamen-runners with the naked sword. The fact is also worthy of notice that the Tsingtao garrison is being methodically increased, little by little, so as to lessen suspicions which might be roused were large additions made. The Japanese have no delusions on the subject, and are watching the Germans as closely in Shantung as they did the Russians in Manchuria.

From Kaumi, kilometre 107, until Ichang-loyuan, kilometre 183, there is not much of interest to be seen. Always the same monotonous fields with their scant villages hidden away in the country. At some stations, however, there is evidence that freight traffic has at last begun, and although still very trifling a commencement has been made. This

is because there is no water to compete with the railway just here and the iron horse can kill even the old Chinese mule.

At Ichang-loyuan station, a name which must smack well in German mouths, you are but twenty minutes from the Fangtse coal mines, a German enterprise of some importance. The thirty-kilometre mining-zone which extends along the whole course of the railway formed part of the original leasing Agreement. In this zone, or belt, the Germans possess the exclusive right to mine, and every effort has been made by the German Government to see that the concession is properly exploited. In accordance with this plan a mining company was formed in Berlin shortly after the lease of Tsingtao by some of the most powerful German banks and 12,000,000 marks (£600,000) capital promptly subscribed. The Government then handed the whole of the thirty-kilometre zone over to this new venture — officially styled the Shantung Bergbaugesellschaft. The Fangtse fields which the Chinese had worked in a primitive manner for hundreds of years were first taken in hand, and the natives rudely driven away. Since then rapid progress has been made. By 1902 shafts had been sunk 600 feet below the surface, and a coal seam twelve feet thick laid bare. Diamond drilling carried down to a depth of 4,000 feet has disclosed the existence of seams averaging all the way from eight to ten feet in thickness. In October of 1902 I happened to be in Tsingtao when the first coal train from these Fangtse mines came

in, to the great excitement of the "Colonisten," whose wildest hopes seemed about to be realised. Since then they have become more sober, as the coal, though of fair quality, is disappointing, and the major part hauled to the surface is only fit for Chinese use and cannot be employed in stokehold or factory. During the year ending 1902, 10,000 tons were brought to the surface, all of which found a ready sale. By 1903 the output was more than doubled, and it is now hoped that by 1906 the average output will reach a thousand tons per diem, an estimate, however, which seems quite extravagant. The Fangtse mines may, therefore, be already termed a moderate success from the German point of view, as, although the coal is poor, the Chinese eagerly buy up all fuel placed on the market. Arrangements are being made now to coal the German Far Eastern Squadron regularly from these Shantung mines, and special steps are being taken to accumulate large reserves of the best coal at Tsingtao so as to make the German Navy quite independent of all other supplies of fuel in the event of war. Tsingtao, in any case, will soon offer unexceptionable facilities as a coaling port; but its unfortunate geographical situation may make it impossible for the port to attain anything but a second-rate importance.

The railway, likewise intensely patriotic, relies entirely on the Shantung Bergbaugesellschaft for its fuel, and the mining and railway authorities having put their heads together, have succeeded in making

very special arrangements for rapid loading at the pit-head. Everywhere one sees the same close connection between each German enterprise in the East, and it will not be for lack of combination that Germany does not succeed.

Beyond this, at kilometre 196, lies Wei-hsien, another moderately important Chinese town. Near here a second German company, the "Deutsche Gesellschaft für Bergbau und Industrie im Auslande," is engaged in mining operations. This company, hardly less powerful in financial backing than the first named, is a species of chartered company (*Kolonial Gesellschaft*), with special powers conferred on it by the Bundesrat. Its concessions in Shantung, which are divided into five zones aggregating an area no less than thirty thousand square kilometres, are placed more or less strategically — that is, where the German railway is going to run some day. Thus it is quite clear that certain of the five zones were deliberately chosen so as to be, later on, the excuse for railway extension, *e.g.* the Tsimo-P'ingtu-Laichoufu area. A railway through this last zone would practically connect Tsingtao with the northern coast of Shantung and see a German terminus looking into the Gulf of Pechili; whilst the building of such a line would effectively cut off Chefoo from the hinterland which gives it its growing trade and soon cause it to languish and die, thus benefiting Tsingtao to a corresponding extent. Similarly the other mining districts extend far away from the existing railway and are the first steps

towards absorption. The avowed objects of this company are the mining of precious minerals, but, as may be imagined, little progress has been made towards putting the concern on a paying basis.

Journeying on, at kilometre 302 (Chang-tien) a branch line is reached forty-three kilometres in length, which leads to the Po-shan mining fields. These fields are far beyond the thirty-kilometre zone, and the special agreement which sanctions the mining operations which the Shantung Bergbau-gesellschaft is conducting here has never been disclosed. Already the Chinese mines here situated are being interfered with, and it would be interesting to learn under whose authority Chou-Fu, the aged Governor of Shantung, granted this concession. Mounting the train at this place I met a number of rich Chinese who had been investigating the question of their mining rights, which were being tampered with by the Germans; and bitterly did these people express themselves on the German policy in Shantung. Powerless to oppose the constant encroachments, the Chinaman has for the time being to fold his hands and submit; but the day cannot be far off when Germany will be taught a rude lesson, unless she learns to forget the Kaiser's insane instruction to his parting troops in 1900 "to behave like Huns." The Hun policy slumbers for the time being, but it may soon awake again.

In spite of all Chinese opposition, however, as at Fangtse so at Po-shan rapid progress has been made, and it is believed that these mines will

ultimately become the best in Shantung. Hopes are also held out by the German engineers that iron ore will offer an opportunity which may have a great influence on the whole future of the Shantung Colony. Iron undoubtedly exists in many places in Shantung, but whether its mining can be turned into a commercial success is still a question to be decided by the expenditure of much capital. But no matter what the expenditure may be, search-parties under the leadership of picked German experts are spying out the land in every direction, and bore-holes have been already sunk and abandoned in many districts in this great attempt to make Shantung a richly paying "proposition." The German is very busily at work, and will continue to be busy for many years to come, and Shantung is spoken of with an air of proprietorship which is highly irritating to those who have still moderately honest ideas of *meum* and *tuum*.

From kilometre 302, where this Po-shan line branches off up to Chinanfu, there is a run of upwards of one hundred kilometres, and it is not until very late in the evening that the train finally pulls up under the walls of the Shantung provincial capital. The railway circles coyly round the city and possesses three stations, so that every cent in fares may be picked up with that painstaking care which the Teuton possesses in such a remarkable degree. In Chinanfu, as at Kiaochow city, Kaumi and Wei-hsien, there is a small German hotel which, like so many Eastern ventures, is awaiting more and

more anxiously the great boom which may come after the war. For in spite of German activity along the railway there are very few European travellers, and consequently but little money to be made in hotel-keeping.

Chinanfu also boasts of a German Post Office, like a number of places along the railway, and every means is employed to attract Chinese correspondence, although such action on the part of a treaty Power is quite incompatible with the open-door protestations. On every German train a section of a carriage is given up to the German postal authorities, who have not hesitated to adorn the outside of their cars with a very big "Deutsche Reichspost," and the orthodox red and black lines. This post-office policy is but one of the many little petty artifices adopted by the German authorities to insinuate themselves into places where they do not belong and indeed have no business. The Russian method has at least none of such pettiness, and the very brusqueness and confidence which characterise Slav expansion please somehow more than this pfennig-counting policy.

Chinanfu has nothing about it which merits special mention. It is the usual big Chinese city with several hundred thousand inhabitants and a small German colony of forty persons whose businesses are not always quite clear. There is a German Consul, a branch of the German Bank (the Deutsch-Asiatische Bank), the German railway and postal staffs, some miscellaneous men employed by the

Chinese provincial authorities for school work, and an increasing number of German babies. The males of this colony have formed themselves into a club — a trick learnt from English Far Eastern communities — and there is now an imposing members' list comprising thirty names. Every effort is being made to get the provincial Governor's staff more and more under German influence — a process which the various Yamens are almost powerless to resist, on account of the eternal questions which the German Legation in Peking raises if the local authorities prove recalcitrant.

One step, however, has been boldly taken by the Chinese, which was so unexpected that it caused the German authorities to make an ugly grimace. Peking declared Chinanfu, Wei-hsien, and Ch'outsun open to foreign trade and residence — thus converting them into ordinary treaty ports where anyone, no matter of what nationality, might reside. This was a deliberate blow in the face for the patriots engaged in absorbing Shantung, and has not been forgotten. It is stated that more mining concessions are about to be demanded by the German Legation as "compensation" for the "loss of face" sustained. Truly Far Eastern politics have come to a cheerful pass when European Powers adopt Chinese arguments.

Meanwhile, it would be a wise move to appoint British and American Consular agents at the open port of Chinanfu, who would be able to watch over interests that are quite as important as those of

Germany. Chefoo is still the principal port of Shantung, and may be counted on to grow largely in importance in the near future when it is placed in communication with its immediate hinterland by means of a light railway. For special reasons, no mention has been made of the fact that in Weihaiwei Great Britain possesses a port far more advantageously situated than Tsingtao. Weihaiwei is only forty miles from Chefoo, has a fine anchorage, and it is absolutely necessary to place it into railway communication with Chefoo, in spite of the unofficial assurances given to Germany on this matter. When it is added that there are a great number of English and American missionaries scattered all over Shantung, it will be understood that there is every excuse for the appointment of both British and American representatives at the capital of the Province.

Although the Chinese have not much power to resist German interference, they are determined to give no possible legitimate excuse for further interference. Police schools have consequently been established at Chinanfu, where the new type "police troops" (Hsûn chin) are being trained. On these men will devolve the entire policing of the railway. A German instructor is nominally employed, but everything which it would be unwise for him to know is kept from him. There are no Germans in the whole of Shantung who have more than an elementary knowledge of colloquial Chinese; and, as all experts will understand, the style of conversa-

tion which the local officials employ in talking with one another can be easily made so complex that the ordinary European flounders beyond his depth.

For some time past the indefatigable Teutons have been trying very hard to obtain the appointment of a German foreign adviser to the governor of Shantung, and they will probably succeed in the end, as the Chinese are quite willing to buy off their enemies at a few hundred pounds a year. The present candidate for this post, it will amuse Herr Bebel to learn, is almost deaf, and is hampered with a failing eyesight. Complications may therefore be counted on to arise with refreshing rapidity.

But much hinges on the railway and the mines. If they prove very remunerative the Germans will certainly exhaust themselves in obtaining fresh privileges and concessions and in extending those they already possess beyond the limits of Shantung province. And even on the other hand if the present ventures are not great commercial successes, the directors and leading spirits in Berlin will state that partial failure is due to the fact that only first steps have been made, and that as soon as certain other necessary things have been done all will be *couleur de rose.*[1]

[1] The Shantung Eisenbahn Gesellschaft has a paid-up capital of 54,000,000 marks (£2,700,000). Of this sum, 53,000,000 marks have been expended on the existing trunk line and the short coal lines, say a total of 450 kilometres. During the seven months of 1904 the line has been open the gross receipts were Mex. $822,197 and the net receipts Mex. $400,935. It is calculated by the directorate that if they wished, a dividend could be paid in respect of the first seven months working at the rate of two per cent. per annum. The first year's

During the summer of 1904 I met several of the forty odd German engineers whom the completion of the Chinanfu line had temporarily set free. Some of these "travelling for pleasure" in Honan took a

profit, however, will be carried forward, and it is hoped that the year 1905 will prove sufficiently remunerative to pay a three or even four per cent. dividend. As an index to the number of native passengers carried, it is interesting to note that in the best month of the year 1904, 57,500 tickets were sold to Chinese. I estimate that there should be no difficulty in raising the gross receipts to Mex. $2,000,000 (£200,000) per annum, and that within five or six years this amount may be doubled. The railway may therefore prove a fairly safe five per cent. investment, but as further capital will be soon raised to provide for the many extensions planned, years must elapse before it is a sound proposition.

Every economy has been exercised in the construction and working of the line, for the Berlin gentlemen are keeping a very tight hold on all the money they have been induced to spend in Shantung. I have no hesitation in saying that in equipment and in good substantial work the Shantung railway has no superiors and very few equals in the Far East. The rails are laid on steel sleepers which have an indefinite "life" and will not require renewing for many years, and the rock bed is excellent throughout. All the bridge work and culverting is first-class. The stations are neat and substantially built, and superior to any others in China; whilst the station enclosures are clean and every detail well planned and carefully thought out. The whole line thus reflects the greatest credit on the Managing Director. The locomotives are the modern and powerful engines of American appearance, and are driven entirely by Chinese who have been trained on the Northern Chinese railways and induced to come to the German line by the payment of somewhat higher wages. It is not generally known that skilled Chinese operatives and mechanics now command relatively high wages which may run from £30 to £60 per annum, or an increase of 200 to 300 per cent. on those obtained a decade or two ago. The rolling stock is all good but in no sense luxurious, strict economy being everywhere observable. The total number of German railway officials is 52, whilst the Chinese number 1,976. The company possesses the right of extending the existing line to Ichou-fu in Southern Shantung, and when this extension is made and possibly three others (to Kaifengfu in Honan, to Tientsien in Chihli, and to Laichoufu in North Shantung) a network of German railways will exist which may have far-reaching results.

great interest in the country and its trade channels; others in Chihli were feeling their way and surveying, and one and all they stated that they were coming back in three years' time, possibly for good, "when the war was ended," to complete their labours in China. They laughed at the idea that the single Shantung line was their only work, and stated confidently that it would soon be but a thread in the railway web Germany was about to spin. Much interesting information may be picked up in the quiet of Chinese inns hundreds of miles away from Western civilisation; for arguments lead to the showing of maps and plans, and these are followed by note-books, until an accurate idea is obtained of the possibilities of the future.

All this activity impresses the Chinese in various ways. Some are contemptuous with the curious unreasoning Chinese contempt; others are merely suspicious; but whatever their outward demeanour, all are at heart hostile to the Germans. I am referring elsewhere to the enormous educating influence the Boxer year had on North China, and it is not necessary to dwell too much on this point here. But I would say that the Shantung Chinese, high officials and low-born coolies, understand the political situation exceedingly well, and know thoroughly the nature of the outlook which awaits their province if German ambitions are not arrested before it is too late. The Chinese "*Mei yu fa-tzu*" ("There is no help for it") is entirely different to the Russian *Nichevo*. It means there is

no help for it — for the time being; thereby implying that later on developments may come of a surprising nature. Every Chinese knows from the moment he is born that when the scales temporarily swing up against him the one great thing to do is to gain time — to gain time at all costs, — and in pursuance of this policy to delay and block everything as long as possible until finally passive resistance reaps its due reward. Any Chinaman or group of Chinese, acting individually or in concert, can make the most confirmed obstructionists in Europe look foolish by comparison. *Faute de mieux*, this is then the policy of the provincial authorities in Shantung and also of the common people: they are marking time and gaining time, in the hope that if the German is only given enough rope he will hang himself.

But by this it must not be supposed that the relations between Chinese and Germans in Shantung are strained, for they are not, as the most stringent instructions have been repeatedly sent from Berlin that every effort must be made to bring about an *entente cordiale* by treating the Chinese with all circumspection and kindness. The diligent, plodding German, with a clumsy *bonhomie* which is rather false, attempts therefore to fraternise as best he can with the person sitting in darkness. It is, however, at best an armed neutrality below this grinning of ceremony, for there is no love lost on either side. The Germans do not make good colonists at the best of times and have but little sympathy for Oriental peoples, and when they are confronted by

men who can under-sell them and meet tricks by amazing counter-tricks, they become both confused and savagely angry. Nor do the Chinese love red tape and German militarism, and they have also already realised that if Tsingtao finally becomes a success it will not be they (as has been the case in Hongkong) who will reap the benefit, but the beer-drinking foreigner with the Imperial moustaches.

Thus things are for the time being in a curious state in Shantung. A great German port is in process of being built up at an expenditure of many millions sterling; an important railway has been completed; mining is going on at three or four places, and experts are looking carefully all over the province to see what it contains, whilst men are being pushed into the few posts that can be found for them without making such absurd demands too noticeable. Briefly, only the first steps have been taken. I can say, however, with some authority that the land of Confucius will never be surrendered without a struggle, which will cost Germany what the present great war is costing Russia. More than that it is unwise to say.

CHAPTER XVII

JAPAN IN WAR-TIME

THE sea fell away in gentle waves as we pushed through the blue-green waters which lap the beautiful coasts of Japan. China was now far behind us, and in five hours we would anchor off Nagasaki. The night was still young, the moon had risen calm and fair; and since in such balmy weather there was no question of bed, the crowd of Japanese passengers, gathered together, decided that there should be theatrical recitations, and that whilst we edged nearer and nearer the coasts, the spirits of heroic Japan should speak from the lips of men who in ordinary life may be prosaic, but who when the fever is on them are transformed. It was but right that there should be some little ceremony, whilst the fighting men were dying so nobly in Manchuria.

An impromptu theatre was soon formed by much spreading of the ubiquitous red blankets to which all travelling Japanese cling. The line of blankets marked the amphitheatre, whilst a little box placed in one corner signified the stage. Four candles were arranged symmetrically, so as to throw their light

on the verse-speakers and leave us, the listening many, in an impressive semi-gloom. Being all Far Easterners, men and women could use their hams after the unwritten fashion, and soon everyone was squatting cross-legged, bowing towards the deck. Sweetmeats and glasses, saké and whisky, sparkling Tansan water and pale tea, were made ready and placed in an order of military precision round the attentive ring; let the play begin.

The first actor-speaker had been a mere cabin-boy of venerable appearance and clothed in questionable European clothes, until those possessing a genius for histrionics had been sought out. Then, after a short disappearance he had emerged in picturesque kimono, armed only with a fan, and in three seconds you had forgotten his previous identity and saw only the man who feels and can express. The face is but a mask, the body all husk — when you have heard and seen a Japanese recite heroic verses these things become clear.

Crouching behind his stage, the hero soon began. The voice rose and fell in the stilted but passionate phrasing of the Japanese stage, which expresses as nothing else can express the spirit of Japan — all the fire, the intensity, and the dramatic power of the nation. The circle of attentive listeners on the red rugs sat motionless and silent after the manner of the East, whilst the hero of the tale carved his way with keen blade down to his destiny. The ship, with its rigging and masts thrown into sharp relief by the clear light of the moon; the sparkling sea;

the constant thud of the revolving screw and the murmur of distant voices — all these took their proper place as a vague background in Japanese minds, whilst the voice alone occupied the foreground and linked the past with the present. Suddenly the voice stopped, the fan clicked down sharply on the little wooden box, and everybody applauded after the Western fashion, which in the East has an entirely different meaning. The venerable cabin-boy became prosaic again and, grunting his thanks under a deep bow in which head touched ground, took to whisky and water with some alacrity. This is the unlovely part of the bridging of East with West. Others took the cabin-boy's place, and thus drinking and applauding the night passed quietly away.

Dawn found us anchored beyond Nagasaki. Vague mountain shapes were dimly visible in the thick morning mist; a few native sailing-craft were stealing phantom-like across the still waters out to sea; a single fishing sampan had begun its early labour quite close to us, and the brown fishermen clad in tight-fitting blue and white-ringed kimonos were already hauling in their first catch to a low chanting that slipped peacefully up to us.

Presently the mist fell away from the pine-clad heights and only clung to the water. The signal station, crowning a hill, picked out our flags and fluttered up a duplicate set from their yard-arm. The telegraph rang out from the steamer bridge, and we moved cautiously forward at dead slow

speed. Nagasaki is mined, at least officially if not actually, and the harbour cannot be entered except under official escort.

At last we lay off the quarantine station, with half-a-dozen other ships about us, all bedecked like ourselves with their signals, and waiting gruntingly until they were given *pratique.* Japanese doctors soon came on board and looked at tongues and counted heads to see that all were there and none sick, to the never ending amusement of the Chinese crew, who ask one another after their fashion why, if they had no fevers, anyone should wish to know what the future may bring; and after the usual suspense which is born of a sickly fear that plague may be found and quarantine imposed, we were duly released.

A little Japanese pilot-steamer, half covered with flags, now picked us up, and, whistling at us sharply to behave and follow closely, steamed off at a cautious half-speed towards the harbour. The diminutive wooden steamer ahead of us curved about in beautiful half-circles, leaving a clear trail behind along which we must follow, threading, in an impressive manner, through the supposed mine-fields and snorting at us sharply if our helm did not pay strict attention to the lead given. We passed into the harbour, leaving the beautiful Pappenberg behind us, and with a final good-bye toot, rewarding us for having been good, the little pilot steamer rapidly turned round, and steering across the harbour, took up its proper place in a line of similar vessels, dressed

as carefully as the best-drilled troops could desire. No sooner did a fresh signal fly from the signalling-station than the first in the line darted off to the outer anchorage; whilst the remaining vessels dressed ranks and closed up, like the orderly little Japanese they were. Nothing could have been more characteristic of Japan in war-time than this early morning scene. The order and the painstaking attention to detail, down to the very number of blasts each pilot vessel blew, showed the thoroughness with which every question is being dealt with by the authorities.

In the harbour lay the first real sign of war — the refloated Russian transport *Sungari* which had been scuttled on the eventful 9th February in Chemulpo, when the *Varyag* and the *Corietz* met their fate. With rusty grey sides, bent and battered super-structure and clean-swept decks, the *Sungari* looked but sorry salvage, but when she has passed through the great Nagasaki docks, and has been rechristened and reformed, she will duly take her place as an ordinary China and Korean coaster whom no man may know for a Russian prize.

Nagasaki harbour in war-time looks a little thin and lank, for much traffic has been temporarily lost to it. Above all, Nagasaki feels the loss of the Russian trade and deplores it daily, which proves what a curious and illogical thing is war. In the old days Russian transports, the ships of the Volunteer Fleet, and the magnificent passenger and cargo

steamers of the Chinese Eastern Railway Company made Nagasaki their coaling headquarters, and the large-handed Russian was the man of all men who was welcomed ashore. Now all that is finished, perhaps for ever, and the Nagasaki people are not very happy.

On shore the little signs of distress, which escape the notice of so many people, are more palpable than afloat. The biggest hotel is in liquidation and its deserted verandahs look forlornly across the magnificent land-locked harbour as if asking why sea-power should in this age so manacle the shore that it suffers thus acutely. Nagasaki was the paradise of all Russians condemned to temporary exile in Manchuria. On the fast passenger ships of the Russian Railway Company, anyone could cross from Port Arthur or Dalny in forty hours, and here in the bright sunshine and brisk air of delightful Japan all cares could be speedily forgotten. How often did one not meet men — and women — at Port Arthur stepping on board the late Dalny train with the air of travellers. "Where are you going?" everybody asked. "Petersburg," came the prompt reply. Everybody smiled, just a little with the corners of the mouth and a flicker of the eyes. It was the old story, for Nagasaki had become the accepted rendezvous for everyone living in the Alexeieff dream-empire, and everybody went there for a few days when matters could be conveniently arranged. Chief, then, amongst the heterogeneous mass which frequents Eastern hotels were always Russian men

and women, large-handed, enthusiastic, picking the roses wherever they could, and forgetting the scratches with the eternal *Nichevo*. On such people half the town battened, and now that they are no more, half the town is very sad and poor of pocket.

Even the Russian fleet, that negligible quantity in the serious affairs of life, had a close preserve on the farther side of Nagasaki harbour, a vast Japanese tea-house of surpassing beauty from which arose by night and by day the twanging of the samisen and the careless laughter of women's voices. There is no woman in the world who does not love the Russian, and to this rule the enigmatic geisha of Japan is no exception; for is not the Russian generous beyond all dreams and always at everybody's disposal?

With such a paucity of visitors in Nagasaki therefore, even the proud Japanese rickshaw coolie is not above soliciting your patronage, for life is becoming rather a struggle without the stranger's stream of silver. Up the hill which Pierre Loti has made immortal with his Lady Chrysanthemum, closed shops and somewhat deserted streets are the rule rather than the exception. Curio-dealers, vendors of tortoise-shells, spurious and genuine, drinking saloons, money-changers' shops, all tell the same tale of little or no business since the war, and all incline to curse the war in consequence. The Chinese, who form an important trading colony in Nagasaki, are hard hit, and the leading money-changing shop, where you can buy or sell in any

coin that has ever been minted, told the story in very few words. In an ordinary year their net profit was ten thousand dollars; since the war, profits just cover expenses and no more. Nagasaki is hardly more profitable than the ancestral village; and the stream is flowing back to China in consequence. Many of the curio-dealers have got beyond that and have closed for good and all. Outside the doors of all those suspicious drinking saloons, adorned with signs in half the languages of Europe, the collarless proprietors and uncorseted ladies of the establishment sit listlessly on rickety chairs with their feelings writ large on their faces. For here again it was the lower-class Russian who made chequered existences possible, and when the Russian is gone all other trade of the Continent of Europe seems to have become shy.

The Nagasaki coaling returns — for the port is the premier coaling place of the Far East — show a grievous falling-off; and although the coaling-gangs have established fresh records in rapid work, it is because they are more hungry and therefore more eager than ever for their marvellous basket work.

Of signs of things military there are none. Perhaps there are a few uniforms in the streets which in ordinary times would not be there; but Nagasaki has long ago finished playing its part as a point of departure for the seat of war. Its only consolation can be that it is so close to famous Sasebo. A few miles round the jagged coastline of Kyushiu, a narrow but deep entrance leads into an absolutely

landlocked harbour. Huge wooded hills crowd in the bay on all sides; artillery is on the heights; torpedo stations and electrical mines make even an approach an impossibility; and so concealed are the waters of the harbour that from the town the fighting tops of the warships lying at anchor below can alone be seen. This is Sasebo. It was this which so long disguised the absence of the *Yashima*, the fifth battleship, from Togo's fleet. The *Yashima* was long stated to have been towed into Sasebo so quietly and so cautiously that she was repaired whilst experts supposed that Togo's effective ships of the line numbered five. But in Japan precautions taken during war-time have been doubled and redoubled until the principle has been clearly established that everyone who seeks to find out anything is held to be guilty and a possible spy until his innocence has been clearly proved. Thus no European can possibly go to Sasebo except as a prisoner. There are but one or two exceptions in the persons of Englishmen representing steel-plate establishments and engineering firms, and from these it is harder to extract information than from close-lipped Japanese.

When you enter the harbour the very first launch which boards the incoming vessel, after the quarantine people have left her, is the police launch; and whilst uniformed policemen attend to the steerage and foc'sle, polite black-coated interpreters engage the passengers in affable conversation, and intermingle comments on the weather and on the beauty of the

harbour with a searching cross-examination which seeks to ascertain the exact locality of the "certain place" from which you have arrived. When you have landed, you can only do one of three things — stay at Nagasaki, take another steamer, or go to the main island by rail across Kyushiu; and in any case your subconsciousness makes you feel that the omnipresent eye of the Japanese police is fixed with a disconcerting stare on your unworthy countenance, and seeks to fathom why you have come from the "certain place" you specified, and if so, whether that place was good for your health. It is at Nagasaki that a *Cabinet noir* is established for the surveillance of all mail-matter addressed to China or Korea, from whence news received by letter could be conveyed by telegraph to the headquarters of Japan's enemies and perhaps upset plans. All these things, however, are very discreetly and methodically arranged, and if you are sometimes inclined to cavil, you will regain your temper by reflecting that never has any power been engaged in such a Napoleonic struggle with so little outward fuss and flurry, and that in the East a secret can only remain a secret by stopping up every possible leak over and over again, and then redoubling your caution and beginning once more anew.

Thus, hardly have you taken your place in the train which carries you across the island of Kyushiu, when policemen appear very casually, apparently absorbed in the contemplation of their own

boots, and looking as if they were oppressed by liver troubles. They do not see you at all, that is, if you do not attempt to move away; just as the doctor, who is about to commerce work on a patient, feigns indifference and relieves your anxiety by talking of other things. You are beginning to be a little sensitive on the subject, too, for already in the station waiting-room you have been twice, and perhaps even thrice, engaged in a conversation which has ended by boring you to extinction. You have never realised before what a simple remedy exists for people who are full of conceit and wish to talk about themselves. Send them to Japan in war-time and let them run the police gauntlet, and they will be speedily cured.

In the train the policemen seat themselves obligingly on either side of you very close to prevent escape, with deep sighs as if the seriousness of the work to be undertaken is no laughing matter. Neither is it. This time closely printed forms, with neatly ruled little spaces all ready for you to fill in, are politely pushed on your knees and you are told to write. It is the refinement of the game with a vengeance. Across the top of the form the information stares you in the face that the whole island of Kyushiu is under martial law, and a series of ominous regulations concerning military secrets — horrible words — add to the rigours of the situation.

The form is not so easily filled up as you imagine, for not only must you be able to write, but you

must also be possessed of that accomplishment dear to telegraph offices — the extinct art of writing legibly; and when finished, you must also help each little policeman with his Japanese-English dictionary, and give an impromptu lecture on why you were born and also why your parents had that fancy for your name. The dictionaries are in small type, and the police are very earnest scholars, and in a rocking train many pleasant minutes may be passed in the pursuit of the obvious to no conclusion.

At last it is over, when, perdition seize you, you have been indiscreet enough to address a remark in the vernacular to a Chinese merchant travelling to Osaka. The police, waggling in their white trousers and black Eton jackets and on the point of leaving the carriage, glance at one another, put their heads on one side, suck in their breath ominously through their clenched teeth, and then, sighing still more deeply — unkind Heavens! — reseat themselves. A chance — a pure chance — has disclosed to them that regulation many thousand and something was in danger of being totally ignored. After all that long Anglo-Japanese lecture, a good reputation, so painfully worked up, is wiped clean off the slate because (*a*) Chinese is a language which is not spoken by the ordinary European traveller by land or by sea; (*b*) in Manchuria the common language spoken is Northern Chinese; (*c*) Manchuria is still largely occupied by Russian troops (*vide* general information allowed to transpire uncensored in the

newspapers); and finally (*d*) all persons are spies until their innocence has been firmly established, and then constantly re-established at regular intervals (*vide* an unpublished work with sub-title: "The Complete Memorandum on War Behaviours in a Belligerent Country").

Under such distressing circumstances for some time nobody spoke. The Chinaman attempted what is impossible for a slit-eyed people to do, to wink, and exhibited an indecorous desire to laugh; the police looked as if they would explode like contact mines; and as for myself, I merely prayed that the train would not run off the metals of the indifferent Kyushiu railway, or else I would be hanged for a common traitor. Still nothing was said. Presently the policeman on the left took off his cap very deliberately and scratched his amiable head. This appeared such a good idea that the other policeman promptly followed the lead thus given him; and for a time the ominous silence was only broken by a distinct, if discreet, scratching. Twice the policeman on the right, comforted by a hazy recollection of sub-regulations, opened his mouth to speak, but twice the policeman on the left silenced him by his air of concentration, and the situation showed no change. At last the diminutive minions of the law arose and took their departure without a word. The four facts, a, b, c, and d, duly enumerated, had been too much for them. Mine was evidently a clear case for the higher authorities to intervene. Seven hours would have to elapse be-

fore we could reach the Straits of Shimonoseki, and the telegraph could always catch me before I could escape on the ferry-boat.

I do not know whether it was this which was responsible for the fact that no sooner had we arrived at Moji and were hurrying sleepily down in the small hours of the morning to the ferry, than a new policeman picked me out of the crowd for the benefit of a black-coated interpreter, and the cross-examination began anew. This time, however, it was all right. I met a man with a sense of humour, and in ten seconds he had assured me that I had escaped court-martial.

You are soon swept across the narrow and treacherous Straits of Shimonoseki, on whose shores the treaty of peace between China and Japan was signed in 1895. A powerful twin-screwed ferry-boat, blazing with electric light, scuds along through the six-knot current and makes for the Shimonoseki side. Each shore glares with electric light, which make the towering fort-armed heights look coal-black in the night. The Moji side is indeed truly coal-black, for here in great stacks the Kyushiu coal stands ready to supply the Far Eastern colliers with their fuel. The Shimonoseki side is the old residential side, which has grown lately in importance through the trade with Korea, for Fusan is but a short 120 miles across the seas, and it is from here that the main passenger traffic between Japan and Korea is centred. In the stream grimy colliers crowd a dangerous anchorage, and hooting launches

rush about in the night with the dangerous full-speed manœuvring of torpedo craft.

The narrow straits are full of night sounds; distant coal-trains, bringing cargoes to feed the war, are screeching vaguely; steamers are hailing one another as they creep in; cargo-boats and coal-boats are moving uneasily before even light has come, so that not one precious minute shall be wasted when the day's work should commence; all Japan, as it were, stirring a little uneasily in its sleep lest too much time be lost and the morrow come unexpectedly.

As the ferry-boat grounds against the pier on the main island, and the slow trooping out of passengers and baggage proceeds, daylight suddenly comes. The electric lights cease to be so bright on either side; the channel turns inky, treacherous black; whilst the great hills which frown down on the water begin to glint, and far upon the horizon-line gun emplacements and frowning mouths show that an entrance into the inland sea through this channel is as impossible as the forcing of the Sasebo naval station.

Once on the main island, you have ceased being a suspect, for it is as if the Shimonoseki waters marked the boundary beyond which no danger can come. The whole of the island of Kyushiu stands sentry at the Korean Straits. If Kyushiu is closed to the outer world and no signals can be conveyed, then the patrolling Japanese ships, which are not as many as they should be, can perhaps safely guard the 100 miles of water between

the heel of the Korean boot of land and the Japanese islands. But if, on the other hand, there is treachery in Kyushiu, the Vladivostockers can make sudden rushes, snap the weakest link of the patrolling chain, and carry death and destruction to the never ending stream of Japanese transports passing to and fro between Manchuria and the homeland. Lying sunk in the middle of the Shimonoseki fairway, a battered ship's superstructure proved the truth of this theory. Like some wounded soldier the ship had dragged herself, covered with mortal wounds, from the enemy until home was almost reached, only to sink down until mother earth held her up again.

As we stood waiting for the train a large party of naval cadets marched down from the station to the landing stages in a compact body. Each cadet had a simple sailor's bundle tied across his back after the Japanese fashion, and all were marching in such an earnest and resolute fashion that one could not but be impressed by the mere look of these young fellows. Once one half-stopped to light a cigarette. The Lieutenant in charge uttered a single sharp word of reproof and the cigarette was flung contemptuously on the ground. For a moment the seventeen-year-old boy had forgotten that Spartan self-denial which is so characteristic of Japan; but no sooner had he been reminded than his whole person showed with what contempt he looked upon his *corpus vile* for tempting him in a moment of forgetfulness. What a spirit the Japanese have!

In the train running up the main island the talk was of war and of the activity of Russian agents in Japan, in spite of all the many precautions which had been taken. Here on the Sanyo railway measures have had to be devised to protect the bridges and the tunnels. A number of small accidents had occurred during the past weeks all pointing towards organised train-wrecking. One tunnel had suddenly caved in and blocked the whole line for several days; it was all vague and difficult to account for, but measures had certainly been taken. At every bridge and tunnel stood sentries, armed *cap-a-pie*, and over peasants' houses the little flags which could be seen flying betokened the headquarters of the squads charged with this work. Here the railway runs along the enchanted inland Sea of Japan, and it would be no hard work for train-wreckers, operating from one of the gem-like islands, to push in by boat during the dead of night and dynamite the road.

Thoughts of such work, however, cannot cross your mind as you gaze at the perfect, peerless Inland Sea. Who has not sung the praises of this divine land-locked sheet of water, with its fairy islands, its lovely shores, and its bluish mist which blends sky and water in the far distance as no human artist can do? At Miyajima the glory reaches its height. Thousands of high-standing stone-lanterns line the shore, worshipping in a reverent spirit; a temple which is the perfection of artistic grace overhangs the sea; the wooded hills vie with one another in

Off to the War.

[*Face page* 405, *Vol. I.*

A Hospital Ship swinging in from Manchuria.

poses that have no equals; whilst on the water sailing ships, seemingly under the tutelage of the goddess Terpsichore, dance their beautiful sails and add the last touch to a beauty which is ravishing. And it is this country which the cruel fates have engaged in a death struggle.

In an hour or so the scene changes. You have reached Hiroshima, the great armed camp. Here at last you catch more than distant echoes of the war. Hiroshima was nothing much of a town until the war with China ten years ago. Then, so as to be able to direct Japan's first great modern campaign personally and to be able to understand the working of every detail, the Emperor moved his Court to Hiroshima and stayed there through all the struggle. Since that day Hiroshima has prospered, and now with the struggle to the death going on against the great Northern Colossus, it has again become the great point of concentration and embarkation. The whole town is blocked with temporary barracks and horse-stalls. Trains pour in filled with reservists to fill the gaps made in the ranks of the four Manchurian armies by the heavy spring and summer fighting. Other Red Cross trains steam out slowly, choked with sick and wounded soldiery. It is computed that there are always thirty or forty thousand men coming or going to the war in Hiroshima; but with all this concourse streaming through the town there is but little of war's pomp and circumstance. It is rather strict, unlovely mechanics, and that is all; a perpetual checking and rechecking, mustering and

dismissing, loading and unloading — an endless, tireless piece of machinery that must never stop. Occasionally some bugling is heard, but never a regimental band, for there are but two such luxuries in the whole of Japan, for amusement and not for business. Sometimes, if you are very lucky, you may see a battalion or a regiment paraded, but this is rare, for it seems as if all lessons were learned long ago and nothing remained but to ship men as rapidly as possible. Hardly have you time to feast your eyes on the sturdy bodies, the bright eyes and the well-kept arms and accoutrements before the men are marching away; and even though they were to remain, there is always the ubiquitous little policeman in his Eton jacket to move you on with better memories.

Beyond the town of Hiroshima are the temples, the quiet, solemn temples, with their deep-sounding bells which echo so peacefully over hill and dale. Here you are your own master, for even the Japanese police can smell no sedition in incense, and you may witness reservists in their thousands praying a last prayer. They are generally not alone, these sturdy men belonging to the Landwehr, but have their wives and babies with them. The father always carries the smallest in his arms, and the child, delighted with the crowd and the unwonted uniform which encloses the paternal frame, cries its pleasure aloud — not too loud, for every little Japanese must be and is well-behaved in such great times. The mothers, however, who clatter behind in their wooden

clogs, dressed in gayest kimono and richest obi, are not too cheerful. They cry in the pathetic Japanese way with their heads but slightly bent and the tears held back to the last moment, welling up very slowly. But every Japanese, from the most love-sick woman to the smallest doll-baby, knows instinctively, if they do not understand very clearly, that the supreme moment in the lifetime of their race has come and that it is alone a united and protracted effort which can give them victory over their huge adversary.

The crowds move on, the Shinto and Buddhist priests give their blessings, bell-clappers are shaken to call the attention of the Gods, cash and copper sen pieces fall in showers before the altars. In spite of tears and of prayers the war is a relentless Juggernaut's car, which must roll on crushing and maiming more and more beneath its wheels. Everyone knows this; but it is *kismet*, and the Emperor has spoken.

In the train a uniform has added itself to the crowd, in the person of an artillery colonel who has studied in Germany and is full of the value of heavy guns in the field. He laughs at the idea that the Japanese have won their victories by a superiority in artillery, and says he would gladly exchange his weapons for those captured from the Russians in the very first battle of the war, the Yalu encounter. By now the world knows that the Arisaka gun is not what has given Japan her victory, but the dauntless infantry and the spirit of Japan which, infecting everyone and everything, makes the

accomplishment of impossible things possible. The Arisaka field gun is a vast improvement on its predecessor, but it is still but a poor weapon, and the Japanese artillery will have to be entirely re-armed after the war with a weapon at least thirty or forty per cent. superior in range and fire-rapidity. But the Arisaka gun is, as I have said, an immense improvement on the former weapon. Everyone who saw anything of the expeditionary forces in 1900 remembers the poor artillery of the Japanese corps and the derision with which the Russians greeted their puny batteries when shelling solid brick and stone walls. The Russians estimated that it would take Japan at least five or six years to complete the re-armament of the artillery, and the fact that before the end of 1903 everything was complete was one of the many surprises of the war.

With all discussing the war and the chances of Port Arthur holding out until the arrival of the Baltic Fleet, the time passes quickly until Osaka, the Manchester of Japan, is reached. Here again an important if mediocre *rôle* is being played. Just as Sasebo and the Kyushiu patrols safeguard the coasts from the enemies' forays, and Hiroshima musters soldiery by the ten thousand to be shipped across the sea, so does Osaka turn out cloth uniforms, shirts, socks, and every one of the hundred things which even the Japanese soldier must have in the field. Ammunition and guns are being toiled at night and day, to increase the weight of metal in the field. The whole town echoes with the clang of

machinery; and for once Japan's azure skies are soiled by the smoke which pours from thousands of chimneys. Placed in the centre of one of the few great plains of Japan, with vast rice-fields surrounding it as far as the eye can reach, Osaka has a strategic position unrivalled in any other country. The important port of Kobe, which has hitherto been the gate to Osaka, is but twenty miles distant; the sea itself is but a few thousand yards outside the town, and a gigantic scheme of harbour works is to convert a silted harbour into an anchorage where ocean steamers may lie alongside railway wharves and speed merchandise from the doors of factories all over the Far East. Numbers of canals intersect the city, and in the inevitable guide-book, callously thrust on the stranger, you read when the native writer rises to sublime heights in his enthusiasm for his beloved town that "hundreds of boats float lazily on the river Yedo, laden with citizens who resort thither to enjoy the cool breezes; whilst itinerant musicians, vendors of refreshments and fireworks, ply among the merry throng and do a thriving trade."

On the day of my arrival, Osaka was permitting itself to celebrate a victory after the manner prescribed by the guide-book, and the thriving trade the fireworks did more than justified the lurid language I have referred to above.

But it is no time for laughter at Osaka. If the town gives much in the shape of manufactures for fitting out and keeping in the field a vast and con-

stantly increasing army, it receives back a grim return — thousands and tens of thousands of sick and wounded. In 1903 a national industrial exhibition was held here, and the great stucco buildings, after advertising the arts of peace and the huge advance Japan has made in the past decade in every direction, are now crowded with Red Cross patients. The whole of the exhibition grounds have become a vast hospital, which no one could have imagined would have filled so quickly; but war is a grim fiend, and even with the perfect sanitary arrangements of the Japanese army, beri-beri, brought on by the fish and rice diet, has accounted for as many invalids as the rifle and bayonet. Tens of thousands of men have been invalided home racked with fever and terrible swellings in the limbs — the Port Arthur besieging force alone sending some twenty thousand of these victims.

Even in Osaka, however, the sights of war are carefully hidden away. You may pass through the town a dozen times and only catch a passing glimpse of white-kimonoed Red Cross patients. Sometimes, if you look very carefully, you will see recruits and reservists coming in — but even such a sight is the exception and not the rule. Everything is quietly concealed from the eyes of the busybody. Never has it been harder to realise in any country that war to the knife, which must in the end exhaust everybody and everything, is being waged only a few hundred miles across the sea with a deathless fury unequalled since the days of the great Napoleon.

A great expedition, yes, you might be prepared to admit that such a thing was possible; but a great war of exhaustion, never.

The three hundred odd miles between Osaka and Tokyo are accounted uninteresting enough, for the speed of the trains leaves much to be desired, and the soot and coal dust which fly in on you make life wretched; but as you pass through the rich rice country of Japan you have ample time to reflect that if the people are poor according to Western standards, their prosperity has vastly increased during the last ten years. Every town from Osaka to Tokyo has been improved beyond recognition, and nowhere do you see the miserable poor of Europe. There may be no great comfort, but there is no great misery, and the people are so happy with so little. Never was there a nation of such happy people until the prosaic West began to push itself in and disturb a century-old content, born of a pleasant, charming life; and never could one feel that war is as out of place as it is for Japan and the Japanese. Left alone in their delightful country the Japanese are everything that is nice; it is only the corruption of the West which has forced them to become suspicious and pettifogging, and is now intent on destroying a politeness which has no equal in the world.

It is well to halt for a spell at Kyoto, the old-world Paris of the country, for here in this piece of the real Japan, with its bewitching streets, its rich pleasure-gardens, and its magnificent tem-

ples you can gauge to some extent how the war is affecting the moneyed classes. Once more it requires but little examination to tell you that the strain is already felt here in Kyoto, though the people, proud as Lucifer, would never make such a confession. Perhaps even it is not so much the strain which is already felt, but the foreboding that every extra yen spent on luxuries and pleasures will be a yen regretted when the real pinch comes in 1906, the third year of the war. Already the Kyoto silk factories are complaining that their trade is being ruined, and that silk, being more costly than cotton and not really necessary, is being declared taboo. In rich Kyoto, the old capital, one of the first things anybody with an eye observes is that all, high and low alike, wear kimonos of at least half-silk fabric, far more elegant and graceful than the cotton clothing of the new manufacturing towns and the rural districts. And the next thing you see is that the houses are more luxurious, articles *de vertu* more abundant — in a word, everything still a little on the old scale, which existed before the great change to modern conditions took place. In Kyoto you catch, as it were, a glimpse of the ghost of old Japan — a ghost which will soon be only a memory. The twang of the samisen and the laughing voices from the tea-houses are scarcely to be heard now. There is more earnest business on hand, and the poor geisha are existing in a manner known only to themselves, for there are few who now come to Kyoto and forget their cares on the enchanted hills

of Maruyama. Kyoto has been made sad by the war, and the old capital is anything but a jingo.

It is best therefore to go to the great temples — the new Honganji for preference — and sit watching in the hush and gloom the old people who come and pray for their sons and husbands who have gone to the wars. It is a wonderful sight this, and is one of the little things which shows you what the people are thinking about whilst they remain so quiet. The new Honganji temple — what a sight! occupying a whole quarter to itself, an enormous temple — rises solemn and vast, beautiful in its simplicity and its massiveness beyond belief; rich and impressive, calm and pure, the whole religion of a people expressed in beautiful woods as no words could express it. The exterior is beautiful because of its great size and grace, but the interior is divine because of its simplicity. You creep up the great steps in your shoeless feet, for no dirt or dust may sully the spotless floors, and it is meet that you should be reverent in the brooding silence which hangs over the temple. You gaze in awe. Inside the great doors, which stand barely ajar, all is half shrouded in gloom, for the light itself, as if abashed to trespass in such sacred places, steals in very quietly and gently. For a few moments you must stop at the threshold to accustom your eyes and your heart; and then, your eyes receiving their permission to look, you see clearly all around you. A great altar with richly lacquered floors and costly ornaments stretches almost the length of the building, and rises

high above the rest. Separating off this holy of holies are beautiful altar gates which look down on the vast hall. Before the gates, some far off, some pressing near, crowds of devotees repeat their prayers and audibly thank the gods aloud after the courteous Japanese manner for bestowing their attention to such trivial demands. Humility is the fountain of all virtue, and here you will see rich and poor alike bowing down at their prayers.

More than anything else, the flowers on the altars will clamour for your attention. Great vases are filled with them — beautiful vases fashioned by the most cunning artists and of the choicest Kyoto workmanship. Every day these vases are filled from the floral offerings sent by the rich; every day the altars are decked with new garlands. And lest some dust should stray on to the lacquered floors, priests pass continually, moving soft cloth brooms along their shining surface.

You will not see all the multitude pressing forward too closely. The old peasant women, who have come from very far so that their sons in the field may benefit by their virtue, seem to hide far away behind the massive teak pillars supporting the great dome, and say their prayers very humbly and very quietly, because they are so poor and so insignificant that it cannot matter much to the gods if their offspring die or not. Stay in this great Honganji temple, and witness this sad peasant procession defiling, and you hate all wars and know that they are wicked. Poor peasant women from the country

places who feed the war with your best, I hope the gods will be kind and your prayers answered.

Once more the scene changes as you take your place in the night express which runs up to Tokyo. It is a new bustling throng you meet, engaged in money-making. Osaka manufacturers, contractors, army agents, and many others who are making much money by the war are running up to the capital on business bent; and it is a lucky man who secures a sleeping berth. Even five years ago first-class compartments were but little patronised by well-to-do Japanese, because the extra expense was deemed unnecessary. To-day the first-class carriages are as crowded as the second and the third, and sleeping compartments in the night trains must be reserved ahead. Small things like this show the great changes in the standard of living and the increased prosperity of the Island Empire which have been brought about by the development of the country, and testify to the fact that when peace finally comes an expansion as phenomenal as that after the Chinese war will convert Japan into a trading nation, the volume of whose yearly commerce will soon bear comparison with European countries of first-class importance.

In spite of the fact that there are already half a million men in Manchuria, the rural districts show but few signs of their absence, and the total must rise much higher before the drain in flesh and blood is seriously felt in Japan. Perhaps peasant women are doing more work in the fields, and are replacing

their absent lords by merely doubling their own work — but only in the autumn harvesting has this been noticed for the first time.

At wayside stations you are reminded of the war by often seeing recruits, still in civilian attire, coming down to the train arrayed in their best for the last time. They get a good send-off, do these recruits, and one which they must remember in the supreme moment when they climb heights capped by fierce-looking Russian heads or ford shell-splashed rivers. Whole villages escort them to the station, with many flags and streamers flying and fiendish attempts at western music; and as the train steams in, these placid peasants stand around the new soldier and give many parting hints. The oldest men of these strange escorts are very old — three I saw in a single hour who still retained the top-knot and half-shaven head of feudal Japan — and many of such men must have taken part in the fierce clan-fighting which buried the old and gave birth to the new so few decades ago. You can be quite certain of one thing — that the men from the country districts will never hoist the white flag, no matter in what predicament they find themselves; every one of them has received parting instructions from the grey-beards, who have reminded them how their fathers died, and that no Japanese ever surrenders to the enemy, but only accepts death. These things will count in the end. And in this fashion, with driblets of recruits and Banzais, the train reaches the capital.

If Kyoto is sad, Tokyo is the very reverse. Every capital is always a jingo; for the spending and receiving departments, having to display greater activity than ever, promote a corresponding activity in every branch of business, and allow fortunes to be made. Many people, too, crowd to the capital in war-time who are generally content to vegetate elsewhere. Japan is no exception to the rule. The best and earliest information is only to be obtained in Tokyo, and here by night and by day newspaper boys armed with clanging bells race round the city carrying their *go-kai*, or war-extras, with the latest news from the front.

It was the day of Liaoyang on the occasion of this arrival, and what an excitement. A vague fear, beginning on those most sensitive of modern barometers, the stock and produce exchanges, had been spreading for several weeks, until everybody was secretly uneasy, although no one spoke a word. Port Arthur had been expected to fall in July, because the battle of Nanshan had been totally misunderstood by the populace, and because it is no Government's business to explain intricacies. Preparations to celebrate that auspicious event were begun in June, continued in July, and when August came with vague rumours of terrible losses in front of the impregnable fortress, and of Kuropatkin's great entrenched strength at Liaoyang, the wise ones began to shake their heads. The end of August and the first days of September were the most critical felt in Japan. Then, when Liaoyang really

turned out to be victory, a wave of optimism swept over the capital, and the Port Arthur decorations were utilised for a grand Liaoyang celebration, and the Banzai processions and the huge crowds became the topic of the hour.

It must be confessed, however, that with all its reserve the popular imagination in Japan is as foolish as the popular imagination of most countries. Everyone has allowed an idea to grow up that the war is not such a terrible affair after all, as had been first imagined, and it has required the Mikado's wise rescripts, courageously issued when people were feeling very happy, to correct this feeling. Few people living in Europe can realise how wise a monarch is the Emperor of Japan. Endowed with a power which is not only absolute but almost divine, he does not require to be guided by the dictates which rule the rest of mankind. And yet he has set to work to be a ruler in the most modern sense of the word, and to understand and grasp every detail which may help him in the exercise of his high duties. He has no illusions on the subject of the war, and knows probably better than any other man in Japan the extraordinary exhaustion which the conflict may bring about if fought out to the bitter end. In the studies of Japan's evolution from mediævalism to modernism, too much credit has been given to the makers of modern Japan and too little to the Emperor himself. For the Mikado possesses to an extraordinary degree the gift of sound and calm judgment, and no mass of detail

JAPANESE CHILDREN WATCHING A BANZIN PROCESSION.

A NIKKO TEMPLE.

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confuses the sober decision at which he inevitably arrives. I believe the personality of the Mikado will count for much when the war reaches its final stages.

With Tokyo feverish and go-kai-ridden, and the whole city engaged in the tremendous task of providing for the war, it is a relief to go up into the cool mountains of Nikko and Chusenji, far from the centres that are feeding the flames. Here the celebrations which have already finished elsewhere are only just commencing. Little lantern processions with everybody arrayed in absurd costumes and huge Russian moustaches parade the streets at night and delight the children. Banzais rend the air far and wide, and the women carry their babies about, each clutching a tiny flag — the flag of the flaming sun on the spotless background. In a year there may be no such waving and cheering, for the war is still very young, and the people do not yet understand, although many of them have forebodings.

But still how deep the spirit of old Japan is entwined about the heart of the people, no matter what may happen, is shown by a letter written by one of those struggling students who throng the Japanese Universities and, living on a miserable pittance, manage to keep body and soul together until they graduate. After detailing from the purely Japanese point of view how the war commenced, he goes on in a quaint English which somehow seems to translate the Japanese idea more correctly than polished prose.

"I will now tell you a story of peace and war. When a child cries, since the beginning of the war, his parents reprove him by mildly asking: 'Would you then become a Russian?' Whereupon the child, much abashed, will immediately become discreet. But if the child is very disobedient his parents sternly say, 'You are a Russian boy, it is quite certain.' On hearing this no child can remain silent, but fiercely says: 'I am not a Russian but a Japanese, and when I am big I shall fight too. You may beat me, but you may not insult me.' From these words, dear sir, you will see that it is difficult for us not to succeed."

Yes, it will be difficult for the Japanese not to succeed, if mortal men can; for the Emperor has spoken, and were it necessary for the forty-six millions who inhabit these islands to march in one vast concourse into the seas which surround them, they would do so without a murmur. Such is the extraordinary nature of the spirit which animates this people.

The sea, however, is not going to be called upon to receive such a grim testimony of a people's devotion, but instead is doing its share of the work in bringing back to health and happiness those of the soldiery who have been fortunate enough to have been merely wounded. Along the sea-shore in quiet villages, which gaze up awe-struck at peerless snow-capped Fuji, you will at last come across the convalescent wounded, quartered in their thousands in inns, private houses, and farms. Each

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FUJI, THE SACRED MOUNTAIN.

man is dressed simply and comfortably in a heavy white kimono with the Geneva cross sewn on a sleeve and a cool white cap on his head. Every day sees fresh contingents marched from railway and tram-car stations, and every man of all these thousands, be he humble private or field-officer, receives exactly the same careful treatment and the same attention. Indeed, the Japanese hospital arrangements of this war will serve for many a long day as a model for the rest of the world.

A little examination brings to light all sorts of well-thought-out details, showing that everything has been thrashed out before being put into execution. The men quartered high up near the lower slopes of great Fuji are the beri-beri patients who require pure mountain air to chase away the humours and the fever which have invalided them. The air is cold here at night, even in summer, and so these men have thick cotton-wadded kimonos. Lower down you come on a different class of men — their kimonos are only slightly wadded; and finally on the hot sea-shore there is no wadding at all. The men walking out look somewhat incongruous in their unlovely ammunition boots and white kimonos, but you soon find out the reason why they are encouraged to take up the wearing of hard foot-gear as soon as possible. The Japanese foot does not love hard leather, and these men having been weeks in hospital have to break their feet in again as quickly as possible and harden them, or else they would soon become footsore as so many of the

recruits have been. Tiny badges alone distinguish one-year volunteers from the ordinary conscripts, and again officers and non-commissioned men have only the same trifling marks, whilst their clothing remains identical.

It is interesting, too, gaining confidences little by little and hearing the tale of battles told and re-told by classifying the wounds. Nanshan and Port Arthur heroes are easily distinguished in the main — they are nearly all shot from above, the bullet piercing the shoulder or face and coming out through the body. The Yalu men belong to the severely wounded category with great scars on them made by bursting shells which have taken a terrible time to heal. From Telissu and Motienling come bayonet-wounded, and from recent Liaoyang every description; shell, barbed-wire, bullet, sword, and revolver scarring all bodies. But what beautiful wounds from the medical point of view. With no deadly uric acid poisoning their bodies, thanks to the clean diet; with perfectly antiseptic bandages tied on immediately, and a most stringent cleanliness always insisted on, the most deadly wounds have yielded to a treatment in a surprising fashion. Men shot two or three times through the body in places that the amateur would have thought vital, grin all over and slap themselves to show that they are just as sound as ever. One man shot clean through in nine places is discharged as a convalescent in five weeks; and all reinvigorated by the beautiful hot-spring baths which abound at all the Red Cross villages,

are fit for service again in a time which upsets all previous calculations. The very bullet scars draw up to mere pin-heads after a month or two, quite ashamed of themselves, and ugly marks are almost things of the past with the Japanese.

Thus Japan in war-time. From Sasebo and the Kiushiu a watch is kept over the command of the sea; Shimonosaki bars the entrance to the vitals of the country and leads in the new traffic with Korea; Hiroshima concentrates, organises, entrains and ships the ever flowing tide of soldiery; Osaka is but a vast war-factory and as great a hospital; Kyoto perhaps weeps a little; Tokyo plans and celebrates, disseminates war-news and receives the war contributions, and is loyally jingo to the death; and around all these places right up to the utmost north of the islands the whole country is sending its best flesh and blood without a whimper or a murmur to feed the war. And in spite of all these things you have great difficulty in realising that the great war is really raging and is not merely a horrid dream. It will not be until 1906 that the country will be a little lean and hungry and the war a matter of course. Perhaps then it will be best to call a halt; if the signs are then springing up from every corner, as they do now in Nagasaki and Kyoto, or else the country may bleed to death internally without the world knowing it. Oh Japanese! you are a wonderful people, and mighty fighters.

CHAPTER XVIII

MISREPRESENTATIONS AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS

If you come to Japan for the first time, or even for the second, you wonder how it is possible for people to have any opinion excepting one about the country. The scenery is wonderful; the climate nearly always delightful; the women the most picturesque in the world; and last, but not least, the houses and the life you see around you are fascinating in the highest degree. Then there is such bright sunshine, such woods and such lakes, and a coast-line which is every artist's rapture. And yet with all these things the Far Eastern European, to whom the Orient has become the whole of life, is often full of bile and bitterness and has not many good words to say about either the country or its inhabitants. How does this thing come about? It is a subject worthy of some investigation, since many disgusted ones are making it bulk large in their writings and are creating some dismay and apprehension regarding the peril which the war has created. To understand fully it is necessary, at the risk of being tiresome, to be retro-

spective and even historical, so that things may be considered in their proper perspective.

It was the book of Sir Marco Polo, that excellent Venetian, which made the first mention of Japan. When the great traveller returned from China in 1295, he reported that he had heard from the Chinese of Chipangu, an island towards the east lying fifteen hundred miles from the Asiatic Continent. His calculation must have been in Chinese miles or li, which, being but a third of the English measure, makes the distance given amazingly correct. Marco Polo's first mention of this island produced a great impression on the discoverers of the fifteenth century. Columbus had Chipangu marked on his map, and it was his aim and that of many subsequent explorers to find a way to this reputedly rich island, where great stores of gold and silver were to be had; for the existence of the American Continent was unknown, and for its discovery Europe has therefore to thank Asia.

It was not until the sixteenth century that the first European actually reached feudal Japan. The Portuguese had the honour of being the first arrivals, for in 1542 three Portuguese fugitives arrived in a junk from China, and after a while they were followed by the adventurer Mendez Pinto in 1545, who, sailing also from China in a ship laden with merchandise and commanded by a Chinese captain, has left behind him a vivid record of what he saw.

It was Pinto who introduced a knowledge of fire-

arms into Japan; and it was he who met the renowned Francis Xavier, since canonised, at Malacca, and by handing him over two Japanese fugitives enabled the learned father to return to Goa, then the seat of Jesuit learning in the East, and there prosecute his studies in Japanese and prepare himself for his adventurous journey to Japan.

In 1549 Xavier and his two Japanese companions, who had been converted to Christianity, arrived with some fellow priests at Kagoshima, the capital of the province of Satsuma, after a perilous journey in a Chinese pirate junk. They were kindly received by the Prince of Satsuma; but the political disturbances which were then tearing feudal Japan asunder, and the evident desire of the Japanese for trade with Portuguese adventurers and not for religion, forced Xavier to leave Japan after a residence of two years with but little accomplished. The mission he had established and the few priests and converts left on his departure were destined, however, to play an important part. The internal disturbances gradually subsiding, Romanist proselytising work received a great impetus. By 1573 Nagasaki was distinctly a Christian city, and thousands of people were converted in the south of Japan. Not only did the common people submit to the new teaching, but a number of the Princes of Kyushiu became converts and seconded the efforts of the Jesuit fathers by allowing Buddhist temples to be torn down and Christian churches erected in their stead.

Unfortunately, whilst things were in this flourishing condition, the suspicions of the great Hideyoshi, who had become the dictator of Japan, were aroused by the gossip of a Portuguese sea-captain, who, rich in the experience of the Indies, is supposed to have said, "The king, my master, begins by sending priests to win over the people; and when this is done he despatches his troops to join the native Christians, and then the conquest is easy and complete." So Hideyoshi took prompt measures to make such things impossible in Japan. He ordered all foreign religious teachers to be expelled from Japan within twenty days under pain of death. In consequence of this Edict and the evasions which followed, six Franciscans and three Jesuits were arrested and taken to Nagasaki and there burnt alive in 1593. The Japanese had much to say on their side even for such inhuman conduct. For these early Christian missionaries had succeeded in implanting in the breasts of their princely converts a zeal as fierce as their own, and consequently the feudal Princes who had adopted Christianity became as intolerant towards those who still held the native religion as the most bigoted could desire. In many cases it is on record that systematic persecutions were carried out, not by the Buddhist or Shinto, but by these Christian Princes, who excelled in the gentle art of forcing their opinions on others.

In spite of this sporadic attempt to uproot the new religion, it continued to have a firm hold in

Japan, until in 1614 the Japanese Government determined once and for all to stamp it out, so that no possibility should remain of an *imperium in imperio* being set up to the lasting disadvantage of the country. Accordingly in that year many dozens of priests are said to have been shipped out of the country, and a special service established by the Government, called the Christian Enquiry, which searched out native Christians and obliged them by the most horrible persecutions either to renounce their faith or embrace death. Rewards were offered for denouncing every class of Christian, and Fathers, Brothers, Catechists, and ordinary converts were placed on a regular tariff which granted so much for every head. The matter has been summed up eloquently by Guysberg, a Dutchman residing at Nagasaki, who was a contemporary of these events. In 1626 he states that Nagasaki had forty thousand Christians; in 1629 not a single one was left.

Meanwhile the Dutch and the English had begun to arrive in Japan and raise new questions. As early as April, 1600, Adams, the first Englishman, arrived in a ship named the *Charity*. It was the sole surviving vessel of a fleet of five ships that had sailed by way of the Straits of Magellan, had encountered the most terrible storms, and had been decimated by sickness and scurvy. On the *Charity* but four men could walk and four crawl painfully on their knees when the coasts of Japan hove in sight. Adams and his crew landed on the island

of Kyushiu, and the Princes as usual accorded the adventurers a civil welcome. The Portuguese traders and the Catholic priests then still resident in Japan were, however, much alarmed at the appearance of other Europeans, and attempted for a long time to poison the minds of the natives against the new-comers. But Adams succeeded in making himself useful in many ways, with the result that the Shogun gave him a large holding in land, and that Japan became his permanent home.

In 1609 a second Dutch expedition arrived; and mainly through the efforts of Adams, and in the face of the most violent opposition from the Portuguese, the Dutch received a charter granting them the privilege to trade at any port or place in the Empire of Japan. This charter, dated the 30th August, 1611, was the authority under which the Dutch trade with Japan began, and under which that peculiar commerce continued up to the time the country was opened by Commodore Perry two centuries and a half later.

Spurred by this Dutch success, English merchants fitted out expeditions to Japan, but in spite of some initial co-operation with the Dutch, relations between the two rival nations became more and more inimical, until in the 'twenties of the same century the English closed their factories and withdrew completely, having suffered a loss of many thousand pounds. The disappearance of the Portuguese in 1640 from Nagasaki, and the

stamping out of Roman Catholicism, left the Dutch the undisputed representatives of Europe, and allowed them to enjoy their monopoly all through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries undisturbed.

It was not until the nineteenth century that renewed efforts were made on the part of Europe to establish better relations with the Island Empire; but in every case the Japanese steadily refused to be drawn from their seclusion. The Russian efforts culminated in the capture and imprisonment of Captain Golovin in 1811. The Americans made a determined effort in 1837; the British no less than six, between the years 1845 and 1849; but all these were fruitless. It was plain, however, that the Japanese policy could not continue indefinitely.

The discovery of gold in California in 1848, the opening of China to foreign trade, and other reasons, made the question of Japan a matter of prime importance to the United States. It was under these circumstances that Commodore Perry, an American naval officer, succeeded in enlisting the support of his Government and preparing his fateful expedition. Perry left no stone unturned to equip himself thoroughly for his task. Every old document and chart bearing on Japan was searched out; all ancient records were carefully digested; and in November, 1852, the Commodore set sail for the China seas, proceeding by way of the Cape of Good Hope. On the 8th July, 1853,

he entered Yedo Bay, as it was then called, at the head of a squadron of four ships.

The appearance of this fleet was the signal for the most intense surprise and consternation on the part of the Japanese Government. For a long time high officers prevaricated and attempted to force Commodore Perry to proceed to Nagasaki, on the grounds that it was at that place that foreign relations had been conducted from time immemorial. It is interesting to remember that Canton had played a similar *rôle* in China as the only open door of the country, and the Japanese were thus only following the Chinese precedent. Perry, however, resolutely refused to accept any such compromise, and in the end the letter from the President of the United States to the Emperor of Japan was formally handed over to an officer of adequate rank at Tokyo. In order to leave time for a proper settlement Perry sailed away to Hongkong with the promise that he would shortly reappear.

The Japanese Government was now at its wits' end. The Shogunate, or military Government, which had usurped the Mikado's authority for so many centuries, had itself fallen into great decay and now possessed only a vestige of its former power. The *daimyos* were all devoted to the policy of seclusion, and in the face of such opposition it was almost impossible to throw open the country without using force.

When Commodore Perry returned in February,

1854, his fleet having received re-inforcements now numbered seven vessels, all being well equipped and perfectly able to accomplish their task of forcing open the door, the Japanese answer was awaited with no little excitement. In the interim three more American ships arrived, and by this time the Shogun's Government saw that resistance was out of the question. After much deliberation and discussion a treaty was agreed upon, and on the 31st March, 1854, the signing and exchange of copies took place. It has been well said that the twelve articles partook rather of the nature of a preliminary convention than of a commercial treaty; for apart from opening two ports the conditions under which trade was to be conducted were not settled. The first step, however, had been taken, and England and Russia followed promptly by signing almost identical instruments. By these treaties three ports were opened to international trade.

These dealings with Europeans produced the most intense excitement throughout the Japanese Empire. Hostility to foreign intercourse, which had slumbered for centuries, was re-awakened and showed itself in unmistakable intensity. The Japanese rightfully argued that the Shogun had had no power to make treaties with foreign nations, and that he was but the chief executive officer under the Emperor who had usurped all his master's prerogative. But finally, in spite of these internal discords, commercial treaties in

which the United States again took the lead were negotiated in 1858, and intercourse at last commenced. The treaties were but somewhat modified reproductions of the famous Tientsien treaties concluded with China in the same year, and all through them the spirit of extra-territoriality, so hateful to proud peoples, is clearly to be seen. Once again an *imperium in imperio* had been set up, and the European, safe owing to his superiority in the arts of peace and war, irritated the population beyond measure by the stand he had been able to take.

It was not surprising, therefore, that for a number of years after this a succession of murders and outrages occurred, rendering residence in Japan extremely precarious, and giving rise to a mutual hatred which constantly grew in intensity. Feudalism in its death-throes was not gentle, and roving bands of *ronin*, or men of the samurai class who had become mere swashbucklers owing to the decadence of the times, wounded and killed foreigners whenever chance threw them in their way. In 1863 a British squadron of seven vessels bombarded and completely destroyed the rich town of Kagoshima as a revenge for a foul murder. In the same year American, French, and Dutch ships were fired upon repeatedly by shore batteries and men-of-war belonging to various daimyos. Both America and France revenged the insult offered their flags by bombardments and burnings. As the Shogunate was powerless to restrain the

recalcitrant daimyos, or exact an apology from them, a joint squadron of English, American, French, and Dutch ships, numbering seventeen vessels in all, visited Shimonoseki in 1864 and destroyed everything in existence there, and exacted, further, an unjust indemnity from the daimyos. And in 1864 British and French troops were sent to garrison Yokohama, and for many years their uniforms were a familiar sight.

Meanwhile, the internal condition of Japan was rapidly going from bad to worse. The Shogun's Government, functioning at Yedo, became more and more hostile to the Imperial Court at Kyoto, and the complicated question of foreign relations served only to aggravate the situation. For a time the expulsion of the foreigners who had established themselves in the country by a display of force was the one subject of discussion and agitation, but finally in 1865 the Emperor was prevailed upon to give his Imperial sanction to the treaties, and the first step towards a permanent settlement was made. In the same year the daimyo of Tosa, a prince of great penetration, began the famous agitation for the restoration of the Imperial power and the retirement of the Shoguns from their hereditary office, on the ground that it was impossible to continue any longer the dual form of Government in the face of the new foreign complications. In November of the same year the Shogun resigned his authority into the hands of the Emperor, and another big

step had been taken. Great changes now quickly followed, and the Emperor notified the foreign representatives that hereafter the administration of both internal and external affairs would be conducted solely by him. After some bloody conflicts between the Imperial troops and the adherents of the clans who supported the old order of things, in which the reactionaries were completely defeated, the Emperor and his Court moved to Yedo, the ancient seat of the Shoguns, which was rechristened Tokyo; and in honour of the wonderful changes which now followed one another with lightning rapidity, the year-period was changed to Meiji, or the period of Enlightened Peace, and fixed to begin from January, 1868. Most remarkable of all was, however, the daimyos' voluntary surrender of their hereditary rights. In 1869 two hundred and forty-one daimyos united in asking the Emperor to take back their hereditary territories, and in response the Emperor issued a decree announcing the abolition of the daimiates and the restoration of their revenues to the Imperial Treasury. At one stroke the whole institution of feudalism had disappeared.

In 1872 the first railway was built; and in 1876 Japan succeeded in opening Korea to the trade of the world by sending an expedition after the Perry pattern and concluding a commercial treaty. Everywhere and in every department the Japanese Government showed signs of the most astonishing earnestness and desire for progress

and enlightenment. With the crushing of the Satsuma rebellion in 1877 the old order of things completely disappeared. Finally in 1889 the Emperor promulgated a Constitution, which, divided into eleven chapters and consisting of one hundred and eleven articles, granted to the Japanese people the fullest rights and privileges.

The great changes, here so briefly touched upon, which had so completely altered the government and life of the country, had not been without effect on the treaty ports. European merchants and others found that in place of the former *laisser aller* policy of the earlier times, a definite, consistent, and dignified attitude was adopted by the Japanese Government, which aimed at limiting and winning back many of the privileges which had been extorted by the earlier treaty-makers, and which had forced the inhabitants of the country into a position of inferiority where the white man was concerned. The debatable question of extra-territoriality was one which could not but provide ceaseless causes of irritation for the Japanese Government. Although Japan had progressed in an extraordinary fashion, the foreigner within her gates was still subject only to his own laws. And in spite of phenomenal progress achieved in every avenue by the Government, the old order of foreign residents persisted in looking with suspicion, distrust, and the gravest concern on any attempts at curtailing privileges in trade, residence, and property-holding which they possessed. The Japanese Government on its part

succeeded in interpreting the extra-territorial clauses in a manner in which China has always signally failed — that is, in giving Europeans the exact amount of privileges to which they were entitled and not one iota more.

The agitation for the revision of these treaties and the abolition of extra-territorial rights are matters of such comparatively recent date that reference is seemingly superfluous, but a few notes may be nevertheless of use. Successive Japanese Governments approached the various treaty Powers, who now numbered almost all the states of Christendom, with a view to placing foreign relations on a more dignified basis. The sincere efforts of the Japanese were, however, neither welcomed nor understood by the foreign Powers, who, approached either collectively or individually, showed themselves bent on extorting the hardest possible terms and offering a settlement to the Japanese which it might have been possible to accept, but which the people, fully posted as to the real attitude of the European, would have lost no time in resenting in such ways as were possible. Thus the Japanese Government had not only to satisfy Europe and America, but also its own subjects.

Under such circumstances it was but natural that no progress was possible. Attempting to come to an understanding with the treaty Powers sitting at a round table was an impossible task; for whilst the granting of tariff autonomy to Japan was not so difficult, the finding of a basis on which judicial

autonomy might be allowed was quite a different matter. Various half-measures, such as the appointment of foreign judges and foreign assessors to sit with Japanese judges for a term of years, were proposed and dropped; and Government after Government was wrecked by the struggle centring round the principle of extra-territoriality. Nor was this struggle a short one and a matter of months or years. It lasted decades.

The date for the revision of the treaties had been fixed for the year 1872; but it was not until the year 1878 that in an American treaty the first signs of a more reasonable attitude were seen. In the American treaty certain minor concessions were granted, but the stipulation that those provisions which modified the old attitude were not to come into force until the other Powers had signed identical instruments made it a dead letter. All through the 'eighties Japan made vain efforts to induce the other Powers to follow, and improve on, the example set by the United States. Conferences were held in Tokyo; voluminous memoranda were exchanged; acrid discussions followed; but no progress was made.

In 1889 after lengthy discussions in Berlin, a treaty was actually signed by Germany and Japan in which the former undertook to agree to the abolition of her consular jurisdiction, and to recognise the complete legal sovereignty of Japan, on the condition that a number of foreign jurists should be attached to the Japanese Court of Appeal.

Count Okuma, the Minister for Foreign Affairs at Tokyo, was, however, soon shown the opinion of the nation as to this arrangement. An assassin attacked and severely wounded him, and in the face of the growing storm the Japanese Government had no other course open but to defer the operation of the obnoxious treaty.

It was some years before anything else definite was attempted, but in 1894 it became clear that the limit of Japanese patience was being reached and that something would have to be done. Great Britain now took the lead, and in March, 1894, negotiations were begun between Lord Kimberley and Viscount Aoki, in London, which resulted in the signature on the 16th July of the same year of a treaty of Commerce and Navigation. In this instrument everything Japan demanded was granted her; and whilst her war with China was briskly proceeding, her men of peace could reflect with satisfaction that they had gained a more important victory than any that her soldiery could give her. The rest of the treaty Powers quickly followed the example set by England, and before the close of the nineteenth century Japan had shaken off the last traces of a system which had become more and more galling, and which, had it not been removed, would have certainly led to unfortunate results.

The war with China ended, and the Japanese Government, after careful reflection, became so enamoured with the idea of creating a buffer

territory between Korea and China, which would render it impossible for the Peking Government ever to interfere again in the vassal state, that in addition to the cession of Formosa the entire Liaotung peninsula was demanded. China, now helpless to resist any demands, gave a reluctant consent, and Japan had thus made her first great false step. The well-known intervention now took place with a rapidity which showed that Europe had been kept closely informed of what was going on, and, once more confronted by the armed forces of allied Christendom, Japan had to retreat unconditionally and retrocede the territory which had just been ceded her.

If the Tokyo Government, masking its real feelings beneath an imperturbable exterior, continued to smile politely after its wont and to forget for the time being the terrible blow that its pride had received, the nation at large felt no such restraint, and once more the cauldron of angry passions was nearly boiling over. The British treaty, removing one of the great drawbacks to European intercourse, had given rise to the highest hopes; now Europe showed that at heart she merely tolerated Japan, and that once beyond her own gates Japan would still be whipped back like some trespassing boy, whenever it suited the school-masters of the Continent to take out their birches. It was a terrible discovery and one which oppressed, and still continues to oppress to an extraordinary extent, a proud and sensitive people. When the intervention

took place the Japanese Government had looked to England, but the British Government had turned a cold shoulder. So gloomy to excited imaginations did the whole outlook then appear that it was no wonder that all the Western world seemed in conspiracy against a little corner of the East. Japan was passing through the fire to prove her metal.

No sooner had a few months passed away than it became amply clear that the intervention had taken place, not only to push back Japan but also to rob her of having any hand in Korea, if possible. As far as Japan was concerned, six months after the intervention the triplicate had been reduced to one Power — Russia; and in Korea, in Manchuria, and at Peking, it was always Russia which, huge and spectre-like, menaced Japan.

A year after the intervention, Russia was more powerful in Korea than China had ever been; half a year later again all the world knew from the Cassini Convention that Russia aspired to all Manchuria and to some of North China; and eighteen months after this the cession of the heel of the Liaotung to Czardom confirmed the worst Japanese fears. Henceforth the word Port Arthur became a stinging reproach, and the Russian advance a direct challenge to Japanese patience. That this Russian phantom was a new thing was, of course, not true, for from the days of Perry the Northern Colossus had been making daring efforts not only to reach the ice-free Eastern waters but to seize

strategic points which gave a direct outlet to the Pacific Ocean and not merely to the Seas of China and Japan. Thus, in the 'fifties, Saghalien had been gradually colonised, and the Japanese, who were coming up from the south, pushed back to their own islands. In 1857 a determined effort had been made to seize the big island of Tsushima, which commands the principal entrance to the Sea of Japan. In 1864 the Government of the Bakafu (Shogun) had been forced to send a special envoy to St. Petersburg, and a joint occupation of the disputed island was almost agreed to. In 1869 trouble with Russia again arose, and, this time acting from Saghalien, Russia massed men with the object of seizing the northernmost island of Japan, Hokhaido. Only in 1875 was the Russian bogey temporarily laid when Japan accepted the eighteen islands which form the Kurile group in return for a full recognition of the Russian claim to the whole of Saghalien.

Thus, twenty years after the Saghalien Convention, and only twelve months after England's full recognition of Japanese sovereignty, Japan found that Russia was just as determined as ever to reduce her to a position of secondary importance in spite of her magnificent geographical position, and that in furthering this plan Russia could now rely on other European Powers to help her. This kindled anew the fires which were smouldering out. Once more Japan was placed on a strict and exhausting defensive, and girding her loins realised that the death-struggle had to be faced — when or how, she dare not

think — in order once and for all to vindicate her position and inspire a respect which not all her law-making, her schooling, and her wholesome adoption of Western methods had been able to gain for her. War and torrents of blood gushing from the sides of stricken thousands were after all the only things which convinced nations. Therefore there must be war.

It was not long before this idea had filtered through the whole population of Japan; and under such circumstances it was not unnatural that Japanese judges, now possessing jurisdiction over all foreigners, should not preserve that calm judicial spirit which is sacred to courts of law. Thus it was found that the European, no matter what his nationality, did not receive equitable treatment whenever the plaintiff or defendant was Japanese. It is unimportant to state how often this was the case, but that it did occur with great frequency is a fact which cannot be denied. As a natural corollary, all Europeans in Japan were soon exclaiming that their interests had been sacrificed, and that although the Japanese Government might be perfectly honest, it was unable to perform its dual office — to conciliate the people and uphold their ideas, and yet maintain foreign relations and the treatment of foreigners on the same footing as in European States. Like all general statements, there was much exaggeration in this, but there was unhappily more than a grain of truth. Japanese Courts were prejudiced in the first instance — of this there has never been any doubt — and

Japanese judges, receiving but ridiculously inadequate salaries, were not above suspicion, as they should have been.

To the legal difficulty was now added another one, caused by the determined efforts which Japanese merchants began to make in order to seize hold of the direct trade with foreign countries, and themselves buy and sell without the help of the European merchant middleman resident at the old treaty ports. This competition soon threatened the old-time position of merchant houses; and when it is added that the Japanese contract-laws were soon found to be most unsatisfactory and to shield defaulting Japanese dealers under the most specious pleas, it will be easily understood that the great bulk of Europeans in Japan became impregnated with the idea that the Japanese were at heart an anti-foreign nation and that East is East and West is West. This idea was strengthened by the fact that all European instructors and professors who could be dispensed with were now soon relieved of their duties and Japanese installed in their places. The outspoken vernacular press, dealing perhaps too petulantly with many questions of the day, was also held to be strongly anti-foreign; schoolboys and university undergraduates sang songs which reflected the feelings of the hour, and in this rising generation wiseacres, filled with the traditions of other times, saw nothing but a yellow peril.

The storm of 1900 in China overcast everything else in the Far East, and threw the direct considera-

tion of Japan and Japanese feeling temporarily into the background. The Boxer year, 1900, although it had vastly disturbed Europe, had not been unpleasant to Japan. A division of Japanese soldiery had marched and fought shoulder to shoulder with the flower of the world — Europe — and had earned nothing but the most extravagant praise. The Press of all countries had echoed with stories of the admirable conduct of the Japanese troops under all conditions; and their bravery, their sobriety, their manliness, and their discipline had been fruitful themes from Madrid to St. Petersburg. And as the army, like the army of France, was the nation's darling, which had a task to accomplish, all Japan, knocking out their little pipes into the *hibachi* and quietly reading the newspapers (which reach no less than fifteen million readers) soon learnt what Europe really felt about this matter. This was so much salve to the national wound and everyone was more contented. It is true that Russia had now invaded Manchuria; but people were speaking well of Japan, and as Japan formed part of a so-called international concert in China, it was well to be patient for the time being. It was at this time that a number of Japanese naval officers directly advocated attacking Russia before the Manchurian railway was completed, but the Japanese Government, assured from all quarters that the Russian question could be arranged after China had been dealt with, refused to act before the time was ripe.

When the agitation demanding the Russian retreat

from Manchuria was at its height, and the significant Anglo-Japanese Alliance had been signed, it seemed for a time as if the Russian Government had at last accepted the situation, having signed an evacuation agreement with China. Had that agreement been faithfully carried out, Japan would have solved the Korean question peacefully to the best of her ability. But the agreement was not carried out, and to the Manchurian irritation were now added new developments in Korea. All these things are fully dealt with elsewhere and are only mentioned to show something of the Japanese train of thought.

Then in 1903 everything, instead of being rose-coloured, became suddenly overcast. It is worth noting that this reaction was exactly the same as had occurred after the satisfactory year of 1894, when Japan had signed her first treaty of emancipation with England and shattered on land and sea her first modern enemy. The feeling of 1903 was then only a revival of the feeling of 1895; all Japan was filled with anger and distrust, since it was no use trying to be honourable and frank when the bulk of the world ignored such conduct. It was best after all to fight. In 1903 it was patent to the few who knew something of the exact situation in Manchuria, Korea, and Japan, that there would be war the following spring.

As far as Japan was concerned, the re-discovery of an old attitude — the attitude of defence against the outer world — was responsible for a great deal. Everyone felt oppressed and morose, and Europeans

generally were again in some danger of being regarded by the bulk of the populace as persons who wished to compass the ruin of Eastern peoples. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was held to have simply cleared the ring in order to allow Japan to fight Russia without fear of a second intervention. This, of course, was but the view of the masses, but the masses do not mince words and their points of view are seldom wrong in such matters.

The war came in due course, and Japanese preparations were rewarded with signal successes on land and sea. But even with the successes came a new discovery — that the war was bringing to light a number of barbaric things which had not been generally known about Japan. In other words, the Japanese were now called dangerous fanatics, and their Allah-intoxicated battalions, leaping forward with fierce cries on a sluggish enemy, appeared only to seek Paradise like so many mad dervishes. The institution of *seppuku*, popularly known as *hara-kiri*, freely indulged in by men who would not surrender, and occurring in such cases as when the transports were surprised by the raiding Vladivostockers, became a theme of open reproach. Even in war, it seemed, invertebrate Europe found that the Japanese were undeserving of equal consideration with Western peoples. And yet, taking this one thing as an example, what is this *seppuku* — is it merely a barbarous custom or can it be justified? I am fain to confess that, properly practised, it is nothing more nor less than a survival from times when

life was more intense and more earnest than it is now, and that, wrong as all self-immolation undoubtedly is in theory, there are cases where practice may differ. A quotation from Mitford's *Tales of Old Japan* will give an instance of what this *hara-kiri* really is, and do much to remove certain misconceptions. Mitford in a rich language describes a grim scene of which he was an eye-witness: —

We (seven foreign representatives) were invited to follow the Japanese witnesses into the *hondo* or main hall of the temple, where the ceremony was to be performed. It was an imposing scene. A large hall with a high roof supported by dark pillars of wood. From the ceiling hung a profusion of those huge gilt lamps and ornaments peculiar to Buddhist temples. In front of the high altar, where the floor, covered with beautiful white mats, is raised some three or four inches from the ground, was laid a rug of scarlet felt. Tall candles placed at regular intervals gave out a dim mysterious light, just sufficient to let all the proceedings be seen. The seven Japanese took their places on the left of the raised floor, the seven foreigners on the right. No other person was present.

After the interval of a few minutes of anxious suspense, Taki Zenzabure, a stalwart man thirty-two years of age, with a noble air walked into the hall, attired in his dress of ceremony, with the peculiar hempen-cloth wings which are worn on great occasions. He was accompanied by a *kaishaku* and three officers, who wear the *imbaori* or war surcoat with gold tissue facings. The word *kaishaku*, it should be observed, is one to which our word executioner is an equivalent term. The office is that of a gentleman: in many cases it is performed by a kinsman or friend of the condemned, and the relation between them is rather that of principal and second than of victim and executioner. In this instance the *kaishaku* was a pupil of Taki

Zenzabure, and was selected by the friends of the latter from amongst their own number for his skill in swordsmanship.

With the *kaishaku* on his left hand, Taki Zenzabure advanced slowly towards the Japanese witnesses and the two bowed before them, then drawing near the foreigners they saluted us in the same way, perhaps even with more deference; in each case the salutation was ceremoniously returned. Slowly and with great dignity the condemned man mounted on to the raised floor, prostrated himself before the high altar twice, and seated himself in the Japanese fashion on the felt carpet with his back to the high altar, the *kaishaku* crouching on his left-hand side. One of the three attendant officers then came forward, bearing a stand of the kind used in the temple for offerings, on which, wrapped in paper, lay the *wakiszashi*, the short sword or dirk of the Japanese, nine and a half inches in length, with a point and an edge as sharp as a razor's. This he handed, prostrating himself, to the condemned man, who received it reverently, raising it to his head with both hands, and placed it in front of himself.

After another profound obeisance, Taki Zenzabure, in a voice which betrayed just as much emotion and hesitation as might be expected from a man who is making a painful confession, but with no other sign in his face or manner, spoke as follows: — "I, and I alone, unwarrantably gave the order to fire on the foreigners at Kobe, and again as they tried to escape. For this crime I disembowel myself, and I beg you who are present to do me the honour of witnessing the act."

Bowing once more, the speaker allowed his upper garments to slip down to his girdle, and remained naked to the waist. Carefully, according to custom, he tucked his sleeves under his knees to prevent himself from falling backwards; for a noble Japanese gentleman should die falling forwards. Deliberately with a steady hand he took the dirk that lay before him; he looked at it wistfully,

almost affectionately; for a moment he seemed to collect his thoughts for the last time, and then stabbing himself deeply below the waist in the left-hand side, he drew the dirk slowly across to his right side, and, turning it in the wound, gave a slight cut upwards. During this sickeningly painful operation he never moved a muscle of his face. When he drew out the dirk, he leaned forward and stretched out his neck; an expression of pain for the first time crossed his face, but he uttered no sound. At this moment the *kaishaku*, who, still crouching at his side, had been keenly watching his every movement, sprang to his feet, poised his sword for a moment in the air; there was a flash, a heavy, ugly thud, a crashing fall; with one blow the head had been severed from the body.

A dead silence followed, broken only by the hideous noise of the blood throbbing out of the inert head before us, which but a moment before had been a brave and chivalrous man. It was horrible.

The *kaishaku* made a low bow, wiped his sword with a piece of paper, which he had ready for the purpose, and retired from the raised floor; and the stained dirk was solemnly borne away, a bloody proof of the execution.

The two representatives of the Mikado then left their places, and crossing over to where the foreign witnesses sat, called on us to witness that the sentence of death upon Taki Zenzabure had been faithfully carried out. The ceremony being at an end we gloomily left the temple.

Here, then, we have a case in which *hara-kiri* was practised according to custom. The terrible scene which Mitford so eloquently describes was nothing more nor less than an execution, an execution carried out after the manner which every samurai might demand as his right. In Eastern countries to die by one's own hand is not degrading; to die by the hand of the common executioner has been in the

past a fate solely reserved for low-born malefactors. Even to-day the silken cord is sent by the Emperor of China to high officials who have merited the death sentence, so that they may strangle themselves without public disgrace. From *seppuku* practised according to custom, to soldiers shooting themselves sooner than surrender, is a big step; but, here again, it is important to follow out the line of reasoning which induces such acts, and to note in passing that it is a thousand pities that European soldiers do not embrace death sooner than surrender. After all, one fights to kill others or to die one's self.

Every Japanese who has left his country in this war has done so with the idea of dying for his country. That he wishes to die and leave this world is not true; but that he recognises that only by an immense number of his kind freely sacrificing themselves can a certain victory against Russia be won, is beyond contradiction. Hence, when ill-fortune places soldiers in a position from which there is no honourable escape, they fight as long as possible and then turn their rifles or their bayonets on themselves. Bushido demands that they should not bring disgrace to their country by tamely allowing the enemy to capture them and gain confidence by so doing. Death is therefore preferable. But in spite of this, the number of Japanese soldiery who have committed *hara-kiri* since the beginning of the war has been greatly exaggerated, and it is doubtful whether the actual number runs into more than a couple of hundred. Undoubtedly a heavy percentage

of the men surprised on board the transports refused to surrender, but there is no record of how many were simply drowned and how many deliberately committed suicide. Excited correspondents who have lately discovered the existence of the East are mainly responsible for the sensational stories which tell of hundreds ripping their abdomens open. But even here the matter does not end, for the Tokyo War Department has now taken certain steps which make it probable that not a single case of *hara-kiri* will be heard of again. But even the Japanese Government, strong and commanding as it undoubtedly is, cannot do certain things—for instance, tell the people, whose indomitable spirit is the true and only cause for Japanese victories, that what has been believed in for many centuries is now unnecessary. The Government can merely point out that the situation no longer demands a useless sacrifice of life, and that more calmness is necessary in supreme moments.

The various matters which have now been hastily dealt with in the preceding pages are some of the principal points calling for comment, although, of course, there are many other minor ones, and a perusal does something to explain the friction and misunderstanding which have been continuous between Japanese and some classes of Europeans during the past forty years. Oppressed by the idea that they were considered an inferior and barbarous people by the purse-proud Westerner, the Japanese people have chafed for many decades, and only

occasionally resorted to violent means, of which the execution detailed by Mitford is a sequel. Given complete legal sovereignty by the revised treaties, Japan found to her chagrin that she was still only tolerated by Europe at large. In 1898 she saw the three Powers repaying themselves for their trouble in 1895 by slicing off pieces of Chinese territory, some of which they had actually prevented Japan from obtaining on the ground that it would disturb the peace of the East. From 1900 to the outbreak of the present war Japan further saw Russia openly seeking to obtain control in both Manchuria and Korea; and thus it may be said that from the day Commodore Perry arrived in Tokyo Bay in 1854 until the outbreak of the present war in 1904 there has not been a single year of real repose for Japanese feelings, and that as soon as one disability has been removed, another has been imposed. This alone is sufficient to account for a very great deal.

In the matters of commerce and the administration of justice alone the Westerner may claim that Japan is only now beginning to realise the new responsibilities which have been thrust upon her. Broken commercial contracts and miscarriages of justice have been too frequent not to make it advisable that after the war the Government should set to work to thrash out thoroughly these two questions. Until a Japanese contract has the same value as any contract all the world over, people will continue to say the same unkind things about the Japanese merchant. And until the surfeit of laws

and regulations which Japan now possesses has been properly codified and simplified, and at least one-half thrown away as useless *impedimenta*, the same accusations will be levelled, and the European who is hit in the pocket will go abroad and poison people against Japan. It would be well if a Japanese Imperial Commission inquired into and remedied all these things.

But already there are indications that it is reasonable to hope for better times in these two matters. Each year sees fewer and fewer causes for complaint; and every month sees Japanese, of a class who even ten years ago despised touching commercial enterprises, embarking on new ventures and personally conducting them. The guilds and associations of Japanese merchants are also doing much to raise the whole tone of commercial morality; but until the system of boycott, which is willingly adopted against Europeans who invoke the help of the Courts, is done away with, guilds cannot occupy the position which should be theirs. Finally, the position of Japanese judges is being improved.

Taking it that it is Japan's object to bridge the gulf between East and West, it may be said that perhaps one-twentieth of the work has already been completed, and that the end of this century may find one-half of the bridge work complete — a result which will be extraordinary. But it is only those to whom the East is really East and the West really West who can understand the stupendous nature of the

task Japan now has in hand. For just as there are seemingly unalterable gulfs in the matter of colour, so are there gulfs in the matter of mind, due almost entirely to climatic reasons and environment, which cannot be easily changed. To step from the East to the West is to step from the ground on to a fast-moving train. There is a sharp shock; a curious sinking away of all those things which have been necessary for one's guidance; a confusion which only clears by abandoning well-known landmarks for new ones which flick past one rapidly instead of slowly, and calmly looming up and disappearing so gradually that there is no shock. To many it already appears in Japan that Kipling's dictum is absurd. It is, however, not only not absurd, but absolutely true wherever climate has put its curious dividing line; and those Japanese who have saturated themselves with Western thought and learning, and almost lost the East, and have then returned to their native land, will understand the meaning of what has been written. There are some things which are difficult and impolitic to express in writing. For it is by turning to the Japanese women, too often described as mere dolls, that this side of the question is seen, and something of the remarkable clinging effect of the East as opposed to the West is witnessed. Struggle as they will, European after European has shown this by being dominated and subdued by the East. In such matters is something of many curious things to be studied, and the case of Lafcadio Hearn offers food for much philosophic reflection. All these

curious points, which cannot be more than hinted at, are responsible for not a few misrepresentations and misunderstandings, and will continue to be responsible for some time to come.

But just as it is unhealthy for the mind to wander too much in metaphysical researches, so is it unwise to deal too much with this side. The attitude of the Japanese Government is here the correct one; it has adopted the broad principles of the West, is irrevocably committed to them, and is absolutely honest. As for the rest, time and development must do as much of the heavy work of re-creating as they can. Money is now being lavished on schools and all forms of education: telephones and telegraphs, steamers and railways, docks and factories are everywhere in Japan representing all the outward and visible signs which a painstaking ingenuity can think of. But still the women in their graceful clothing stand syren-like and wave the men back. The women count much in every country's development or decay, and until now the West, in spite of all legislation and education, has left untouched the women of Japan, whose influence is very great.

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A Japanese Garden.

CHAPTER XIX

ENGLAND AND JAPAN

THE general remarks on Japan which have preceded will have prepared the ground to some extent for an examination of the special question of British and Japanese relations. It is a question which cannot be lightly considered, since it is already regarded with grave concern by those who understand the extremely complex situation to-day existing in the Far East — a situation which contains every possibility and impossibility that human beings can think of, and which will present many new features as soon as the war comes to an end. On the actual value of the relations which then exist between England and Japan, much in Asia will depend; and as the subject is a lengthy one, only certain features of it can be rapidly considered.

Americans are sometimes apt to suppose that, because Commodore Perry with his frigates and brigs induced Japan to emerge from a seclusion which had lasted for centuries, it was the United States which opened up the country and developed the trade and resources of the Island Empire in the

'fifties, 'sixties, and 'seventies of the last century. Nothing could be more incorrect.

Previous to the coming of Perry, England had made a number of unsuccessful attempts to enter into direct negotiations with the Shogun's Government; but as the opening of China was then being forced almost entirely by England, it was impossible for her at that time to bestow sufficient attention on Japan. And, as Commodore Perry made Hongkong his base, it must be assumed that a close understanding then existed between the two Anglo-Saxon Powers. Just as it was from the coasts of China that the United States ships made their way to Japan, so it was from these coasts that British officials and British merchants steamed east immediately after the first Japanese treaties had been signed, and established themselves at the Japanese ports. Lord Elgin, Admiral Sir James Sterling, Sir Rutherford Alcock, Sir Harry Parkes, — these are a few of those who, having been first associated with China, went subsequently to Japan during the 'fifties and 'sixties to place matters there on the same footing as in the Celestial Empire. And behind these British officials came British merchants and small traders in some numbers, who monopolised the Japan trade and made English the *lingua franca* of the open ports.

The consideration of China and Japan, from the British official and merchant point of view, as countries falling into the same class and demanding the same treatment was therefore not unnatural.

Coming from China, Englishmen were brought into contact with a people far inferior in commerce to those they had just been dealing with, and, whatever other qualities the Japanese possessed, the population was rated for the time being as an inferior one. Thus men of the stamp of Sir Harry Parkes held that it was a misconception on the part of the Japanese to consider extra-territoriality *per se* as a derogation from national sovereignty, and to chafe under the bonds of this peculiar system. Parkes was pleased to point out constantly that throughout the Middle Ages in Europe, different degrees of extra-territoriality had been the rule rather than the exception. He argued that the Jews had been more or less under their own jurisdiction; that the clergy were almost entirely independent of territorial laws; that the Hanse and other towns had their special privileges; and, thus continuing in this strain, one of the most brilliant Englishmen who has ever come to the Far East remained a firm upholder of extra-territoriality to the end.

Not until Japan succeeded in inducing the popular imagination to detach her from direct association with China, and until British Ministers Plenipotentiary uncontaminated by the China point of view began to be appointed to Japan, did English official opinion realise that other times demanded other customs. By the end of the 'eighties it was understood that the old method of treating Japan was dangerous; and viewed in its proper light, the treaty of commerce and navigation, to which refer-

ence has already been made, which was finally concluded between England and Japan in 1894, must be rated as fully as important an instrument as the Alliance Treaty of 1902. It is curious for students to note that the time between these two British treaties which have done so much for Japanese advancement is eight years, which is approximately the same period as elapsed between those other two attempts to arrest Japan's progress — the 1895 intervention and the 1903–4 derogatory negotiations which ended in war.

In spite of the fact, therefore, that Admiral Sterling's fleet was only the second to negotiate with Japan half a century ago, it was England and no other country which eleven years ago gave the signal authorising Japan to take her proper place in the comity of nations — a signal which no other Power had dared to give. But the part which England played in 1895 was one not lost on Japan. Japan had turned then to England, and expected, after the treaty of 1894, that some support would be given against the triplicate of powers which menaced her with armed strength in order to enforce the return of the Liaotung to China. But England remained silent, though Japan must have understood that the idea of applying the slicing process to China was distasteful in the extreme to a Power which but a few months before had surrendered certain privileges because Japan was intent on adopting everything which was honourable and sound.

The attitude assumed in 1895 could be understood, but the deplorable weakness of Lord Salisbury's Government in the winter of 1897–1898 — a weakness of which the present colossal struggle is the direct result — was viewed with astonishment and dismay in Japan, and probably gave the first inkling of the grand new discovery which is now at every opportunity impressed on foreign Powers; that England's responsibilities were growing too great for her, and that she could no longer accomplish alone things she had been capable of before. To the Japanese mind it seemed incredible that a Power which was truly mistress of the seas, which had opened up China and indeed the whole of the Far East, which had warned Russia away from the island of Tsushima in the 'sixties, which had occupied Port Hamilton in 1886 merely because Russia had given signs of a desire to annex Korean territory, which had prevented Japan from coming near the treaty-ports of China in the 1894–1895 war, — in a word, a Power which controlled the situation entirely — should suddenly discover that she was not prepared to do anything but acquiesce in everything that the Continental Powers might plan in China. It is almost unnecessary to say what would have happened in 1898 if England had insisted on China refusing to grant the leases of the Port Arthur, Kiaochow, and Kwangchouwan territories, for it must be amply clear by now that a collapse as sensational as that of the war year 1904 would have immediately taken place. France would not have

gone to war in 1898 to help Russia and Germany in questionable combination; Russia was manifestly bluffing; and Germany, who was actually trespassing on a quasi-Russian *enclave* would never have gone to any great lengths, until she was able to convince herself that there was nothing to be feared from British battleships.

The territorial leases of 1898 were, therefore, proofs positive to Japan that England would not go to war or run the risk of going to war over the Chinese question excepting as a last resource. And, further, the history of these leases showed that England would not enter into serious direct negotiations with the great Continental Powers on Far Eastern matters for fear that such negotiations, if determined and emphatic, might result in creating a state of affairs from which there would be no honourable retreat except by indulging in war-like acts.

The transfer of the harbour and adjoining territory of Weihaiwei, on a lease to run "for so long a period as Port Arthur shall remain in occupation of Russia," was an operation in which Japan was not only directly interested, but which was actually prompted by her and which appeared to her the best *pis aller* to be found. For Weihaiwei had been the last spot in Chinese territory to be evacuated by Japanese troops as a sequel to the 1894–1895 war — an evacuation which was not completed until the final instalment of the Chinese war indemnity was paid over to the Japanese representatives in London. The lease of Weihaiwei

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DRUMMERS AND BUGLERS OF THE WEIHAIWEI REGIMENT.

to England was, therefore, an Anglo-Japanese arrangement managed at Peking by the British and Japanese Legations, and, as such, a first indication of the coming Anglo-Japanese *rapprochement*. And in this connection a curious point may here be noted before it is lost sight of. The stipulation quoted above — that the Weihaiwei lease should continue so long as Russia remained at Port Arthur — proves clearly that Russia alone was counted an enemy in the Far East, and that Germany's secret scheming and dangerous activity were completely misunderstood at the time. In fact, Germany was counted rather as a clever friend than as a cunning enemy. Thus we find such an acute observer as Mr. Valentine Chirol convinced, a few months after the Chino-Japanese war, that Germany, having been left out in the cold by Russia and France in the matter of Chinese loans after the intervention of 1895, could be counted on as a friendly Power — that is, friendly to the Anglo-Saxon conception of the Far East. The fact that the unfortunate understanding still existing regarding the subscription and flotation of Chinese loans by English and German bankers in combination had then just been entered into, doubtless misled Mr. Chirol; he little dreamt that the German policy of hunting with the hounds and running with the hare was to be exposed as it has been during the past seven years. It must be therefore both amusing and irritating for Japanese statesmen to reflect at the present moment that one-half of the £16,000,000 sterling Chinese loan of

1898, on the payment of which Weihaiwei was evacuated, was subscribed by Germany as a friend, though by that time Kiaochow had already been occupied, an understanding had been entered into with Russia, and an anti-Japanese policy fully planned. Had Germany's *rôle* in the Far East been better understood, the Weihaiwei leasing agreement would have contained the same reservation regarding the Kiaochow lease as it did regarding the Port Arthur one.

The European world had not yet grasped this wonderful new state of affairs, created by the '98 leases in China and by the American annexation of the Philippines, before the Boxer outbreak occurred. Europe, previously somewhat dismayed by the spectre of a yellow Asia rising against the white man, and now confronted by a situation which it in vain attempted to gauge, was pleased to form itself into a curiously unknown quantity, termed an International Concert, and, for the time being, rivalries were nominally forgotten.

The assassination of gallant Baron von Ketteler, the German Minister to Peking, in 1900 was hardly a less fortunate occurrence for Germany than had been the murder of the two missionaries in Shantung in 1897. The Kaiser, proudly reviewing his departing troops, made fiery speeches which attracted universal attention, and followed this up by appointing Field-Marshal Count von Waldersee, a pleasant gentleman of somewhat mature years, to a command which diplomacy and the Concert afore-

said managed to make supreme. And not content with seeing this, the short-sighted Foreign Office which it is England's proud privilege to possess, concluded the Anglo-German Convention of 1900 so as to round off the various understandings which had been come to with Berlin regarding the Far East, and to allow England to retire from her position of paramountcy.

Thus, during a time when the general situation was in the making, there was little enough heard of England and Japan for the simple reason that the first country was hoping that everyone was being pleased, and that the second was on a silent and amazed defensive. But the admirable advice of Clauwitz that no defensive is perfect without offensive operations was completely forgotten. Japan, however, understood that the embarrassment caused by the protracted South African struggle was enough to account for England's weakness and effacement in the East; and it is, therefore, not surprising to know that the course of the Boer war was for many reasons watched every whit as closely at Tokyo as it was in London.

By the year 1901 it seemed clear to Japanese statesmen that Lord Kitchener had the South African situation well in hand, and that the time had arrived, as in 1894, when the most earnest representations would have to be made in London regarding the future of the Far East. It must be admitted that the British Government was slowly forced into the Anglo-Japanese agreement by the

frankness of the Japanese approaches, which made it clear that if England persisted in acting as she had done during the previous four years, there remained nothing for the Japanese Government but to make their peace on the best terms possible with Russia. It was, therefore, nothing more than a choice of an Anglo-Japanese Alliance or of a Russo-Japanese Alliance. Fortunately at the eleventh hour the British Government realised that the parting of the ways had been reached, and that there was nothing to be done but to throw in her lot with Japan or see the British position in the Far East largely destroyed. It is curious how an eleventh hour has almost always until now been left for the British Government in which to re-consider its entire position; but it is by no means certain that such good luck will always continue.

Meanwhile 1902 and the first part of 1903 gave a necessary breathing-space during which people in Europe might have realised for the first time that the world was dividing into two rival camps in the East. Over the first flew the flags of England, the United States, and Japan; over the second the standards of Continental Christendom. The first camp stood for Anglo-Saxon ideals; the second for the old policy; there could be no question of which was the stronger of the two. Now, safe in a well-secured position, Japan pushed to the fore and demanded a hearing. Everyone in Japan knew what was coming.

The actual outbreak of the great war in 1904

provoked grave misgivings even in England. The position in the Far East was totally misunderstood; Russian strength had been grossly exaggerated by writers neither competent nor willing to investigate a question which demanded much study and collection of data and a knowledge of things which very few possess. It seemed clear that Great Russia would rise up and crush valiant little Japan.

The first fifteen months of the war have told their own story, and have educated everyone more than the history of the fifteen preceding years. Everyone now knows something of the Far East and something of the issues at stake; and now the supreme question has become, What should and must be done after the expiry of the present term of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in order to extract the maximum amount of good from the war. It is a question which at the present moment engages the most astute intellects, and it is one which in the deciding will give birth to many other questions, impose new burdens, and necessitate the sweeping-away of shibboleths which have done duty for a tale of years without number. No matter what is decided, the decision will be one which will affect the position of every one of the important Powers of the world and see a re-shifting of forces from Stamboul to the Pacific Ocean.

Three things can be done regarding the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and three things only. Firstly, it can be cancelled after the present term of five years; secondly, it can be renewed for a like or longer

period on the same terms; and, thirdly, it can be renewed with its provisions much extended so as to make it the most binding agreement in British Eastern history. A few words of explanation are necessary regarding certain points in the three possibilities. Concerning the first, Article VI. of the existing treaty states that if either of the high contracting parties wishes to terminate the Alliance at the end of the five years' period — the 30th January, 1907 — the treaty must be denounced twelve months before that date, *i.e.* it must be denounced in January, 1906. If it is not so denounced it must remain in force until the expiration of one year from the day on which either of the high contracting parties should have notified the intention of terminating it, it being understood that should either ally be actually engaged in war, the treaty must *ipso facto* continue in force until peace is concluded. The language of these most important clauses is clumsy — perhaps it was the intention of the makers to have it so; for whereas the treaty is a five years' treaty, the qualifying clauses which follow the actual text of Article VI. can be understood to mean that so long as neither party denounces the instrument it can remain in force indefinitely. This may be explained by assuming that the possibility of war actually occurring or merely threatening during the decade ending 1910 was foreseen, and that the treaty being a frank and manly instrument gives each party much latitude. Unless, therefore, the treaty is denounced by the

30th January, 1906, it may remain in force for a number of months after the Russo-Japanese war has ended without causing misgivings to either signatory.

The second possibility, that is, that the treaty be merely renewed, is therefore to some extent covered by the first — at least for a number of years, although, of course, the refixing of another five or ten year period would have to come, were the wisdom of renewal admitted by both parties. Finally, the third possibility — the extension of the Alliance so as to make it so binding that it would include as provisions in its terms the maintenance of the *status quo* in every part of Asia and practically turn England and Japan into a single country in peace or war, although it has been brought into prominence by an inspired discussion in the Tokyo Press, has evidently been carefully considered in India and England for some time in the past. What, then, should be done? Should the Alliance be cancelled, or renewed, or its terms extended?

It is quite evident that public opinion in both England and Japan is entirely against any idea of cancellation, and that therefore this first possibility may be at once dismissed as both impolitic and uncontemplated. This narrows down the field to much smaller dimensions and places the matter in a somewhat different light. Admitting that the Alliance must be renewed, it remains only to be decided on what terms that renewal must take place. And here it is to be asked what terms will give the

maximum amount of strength with the minimum amount of risk to both countries.

It must be confessed at once that so far the Alliance has entirely fulfilled its object, although whether it will continue to do so is a different question altogether. Thus it has cleared the ring of all persons excepting the two belligerents; it has not permitted fresh encroachments to be made on Chinese territory; and it has inspired a wholesome fear — if also a bitter enmity — in the breast of every European Power. Whether it will be equally efficacious later on cannot now be answered, but as the re-armament of the British artillery, the concentration of the Indian Army on the Indian frontier, and the re-distribution and consequent increase in striking power of the British Navy will be in all probability completed before the present hostilities come to an end, there is no reason for supposing that the British Government will be in any but a confident mood. Supposing that the treaty will fully serve its purpose up to the end of its term, it is self-evident that much will depend on the final results of the war as to whether it will be politic to extend its provisions in the manner which has been already suggested in the Press, or whether such a course would be a rash undertaking for both countries. Should Japan succeed, it would be to the advantage of both signatories of the Alliance to call a confidential conference at Tokyo, at which, in addition to other interests, India and China would be adequately and directly represented,

and only then to arrive at an understanding which would be one of the most momentous ever recorded in Asia, embodying in a clear and accurate document an Alliance which would mean the re-shaping of the entire East.

But it must not be lightly supposed that such a conference has only to be held and the new provisions of the treaty decided on for all obstacles to be removed. What will be seen elsewhere about public opinion in the Far East on the subject of the great war will make it clear to all that, in spite of so-called *rapprochements* which have lately been the order of the day in Europe, every Power in Christendom excepting England and the United States is at heart bitterly opposed to the Japanese; and that the present irritation against England for having entered into the Far Eastern Alliance may not only develop ten-fold if the provisions of that Alliance are extended, but may actually lead to another Titanic struggle which may finally decide the fate of Asia. Neither must the fact be lost sight of that any agreement which ignores China, and does not take her into the confidence of the signatory Powers, will lead to great trouble in the near future, as it is now amply clear that China in a very few years will occupy a very different position from the insignificant one she holds to-day. Any extension of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance will increase mutual responsibilities enormously, will create new risks, add to already existing enmities, and be fraught with many perils of the gravest kind. Instead of the

flames of war lighting Manchuria's hills and plains as they do now, they may, soon after they have died down, leap sky-high once again along an immense land frontier extending from Asia Minor to the seas of Okhotsk, involving the whole world in the bloodiest conflict ever known. For the fighting spirit is still as strong to-day, although it is slightly masked by a veneer of civilization, as it has ever been before, and one war passes the lust all over the world. The grand lesson of the war, that a railway can do almost anything it is called upon to do, must teach all sooner or later that sea-power is no longer what it once was, and that rail-power is sharply contesting the hitherto uncontested title which the waters have possessed for many years. All Europe, excepting England, may reach Asia by rail, and in ten or twenty years Russia may not be the only Power favoured in the matter of railway communication in Asia as she is to-day.

Under such circumstances it is essential, in a manner which admits of no contradiction, that the second Anglo-Saxon power, the United States, should be fully consulted, and the true views of that Government learnt, before England can commit herself definitely to a policy which cannot, once it is adopted, be laid aside again for a number of years. The recent action of the United States Senate Committee in the matter of European arbitration treaties is difficult to assess at its proper value; it may be read as implying that the United States wish to retain full liberty of action and do not desire to

bind themselves in any way or in any shape to any Power or group of Powers; or on the other hand it may mean that some of the results of the conflict have already been foreseen and that America believes that more fighting must come in which she may be involved. In any case it is obvious that, until the fate of High Asia and China is decided, arbitration is dead.

Granted that the Asiatic dominions of the British Crown are properly consulted, that China is included in a very special manner in any arrangements entered into, and that the United States Government concurs fully in such arrangements, it must be confessed that a treaty guaranteeing the *status quo* in the whole of Asia and making it incumbent on the second of the two signatories to draw its sword on behalf of the first if wantonly attacked, possesses merits and a general attractiveness which it is impossible to deny.

But hand in hand with the signature of such an instrument would have to go a strict delimitation of frontiers along the entire mainland of Asia, so that the nature of the responsibilities assumed would not only be properly understood but thoroughly brought home to everyone. For in the case of China, it is not unlikely to suppose that should Russia invade Chinese Turkestan and Mongolia and cynically seize portions of these vast territories, the Peking Government would turn to the makers of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and ask immediately for help. If such demands were met by a diplomatic *non*

possumus, the results would be grave, for Chinese officials would not be slow to conclude that the great Eastern Alliance had been entered into merely for the benefit of the two signatories and for no one else. And thus China would be forced to resume the old attitude of coquetting with everybody until she was strong enough to throw down the gauntlet to all. In fact, by far the greatest portion of the entire Eastern question is now a question of the Chinese land-frontier — not the narrow frontiers of the eighteen provinces, but the immense Manchurian-Mongolian-Turkestan frontier, which stretches from the Ussuri line to the Hindu Kush and Western Kasgaria and measures some five thousand miles. Whatever the end of the present war may be, it is not improbable that pressure will be immediately felt on this land-frontier. Indeed, seeing that Russia would be hard to attack were she to march openly into Chinese Turkestan and Mongolia, it is more than probable that the end of the war may see Russia withdrawing her last troops from Manchuria, pushing them into other Chinese dependencies, and proclaiming the annexation of a block of territory ten times the size of Japan as a *quid pro quo* for the loss of Manchuria and the Primorsk, and as a summary vengeance on China for not confirming the Muscovite arrangements, tentatively made regarding the three Eastern provinces long before there was an immediate prospect of the present war.

The extension of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance may therefore demand immediate action — such as

the despatch of Indo-Japanese expeditionary forces to proceed to the relief and temporary occupation of strategical points in Chinese Turkestan, Persia, and Mongolia, possibly in company with the newly raised Chinese forces; whilst hand-in-hand measures would have to be devised for helping China financially so that her modern army could be rapidly increased in numbers until it reached half a million men. Much railway building, too, would have to follow the conclusion of such a new Alliance, for it is now impossible to move troops without rail-transport. The question of putting the Indian Empire into railway communication with the Chinese Empire may arise at once, making the investment of heavy amounts of money an immediate necessity. These are but a few of the points which immediately suggest themselves, and, seeing the vast field which has to be covered, a conference fully attended by large numbers of high officials of the two Powers concerned seems absolutely essential.

In the preceding chapter, certain aspects of the case which Japan's detractors are pleased to make out against her have been touched on, such as the defective commercial morality which has undoubtedly existed to some extent in the past; the indifferent administration of justice in a number of cases; the distaste which the masses at heart have for the European; and the as yet partial success of the immense effort made by the Japanese Government to bridge the East and the West. No mention has been made of another point — Japan's

alleged desire to become the dictator and leader of Asia — because events will show that this is an entirely irrational and foolish idea which has never been seriously considered by responsible Japanese statesmen. But the points which have been dwelt on, at a time which some might consider both inopportune and impolitic, have been mentioned in order to throw the more into relief another matter — the inflexible resolve of Japan's leaders to conquer all the many difficulties which beset their path, and to change completely the attitude of the whole nation in matters where a change is desirable. It is wholly unnecessary to speak of the high ideals which such men possess, and the success which is already crowning their efforts. Every year sees more and more Japanese educated in such a manner as to saturate them with Anglo-Saxon ideals; every year sees such men progress more and more away from old-time conceptions to new-time ones. Headed by the samurai classes, the common people are rapidly beginning to look at many matters from a different standpoint, and ten years after this great war is over a remarkable change will have been witnessed in every department of their life. The Japanese Government well knows that it is just as dangerous to go too fast as to go too slow; and, therefore, education, the improvement of communications, the development of manufactories and industries must be the leaders in the new movement, and not mere paper decrees and laws, of which there are already a surfeit. The Japanese Govern-

ment is likewise to be trusted absolutely, and when the one million men who have gone out into the world in pursuance of its policy come back from the war, the influence they will exert will be a very great one. The old feeling which oppressed Japan secretly for nearly half a century — the feeling that she was despised and rejected of men — will have completely disappeared, and in its place will come a new-born confidence which at first may appear truculent, but which will soften down with time. Before this war, Japan had all the feelings of a debtor who is haunted by forebodings that creditors will pounce down unjustly one day and distrain lands and chattels. After the war, of such a feeling there will not be a trace.

And in the important matters of finance and commerce, a great improvement will also take place which should soon make Japan the fifth or sixth trading nation of the world. In 1903 Japanese trade was valued at some £61,000,000 sterling. During 1904, in spite of the war, a remarkable if forced expansion took place, raising the yearly amount to nearly £70,000,000 sterling. Before the end of another decade it is not unlikely that this trade will be valued at £3 per head, and that the population, by then exceeding 50,000,000 of people, will possess a commerce equal to £150,000,000 sterling per annum. Twenty or thirty years from now even this figure may be doubled, and what this will mean to the rest of the Far East is not yet realised. Nor will European trade suffer by this

development of Japanese industries. On the contrary, all past experience confirms the belief that the growth of Japanese commerce will be accompanied by a corresponding expansion in the commerce of other nations. All will benefit alike in trade matters.

The money markets of England and America have the most serious stakes in this trade. Already £52,000,000 of war loans have been placed in London and New York. Nor is it realised by English people how important a share of Japanese trade they already possess. In 1903 — the complete figures for 1904 being not yet available — the exports of the British Empire to Japan approached £13,000,000, whilst the imports from Japan were £7,000,000, or 32 per cent. of the entire trade. The United States accounted for another £13,000,000 more; and thus the two Anglo-Saxon Powers have "a controlling interest" in Japan's development. The great increase of imports into Japan during 1904, an increase exceeding 54,000,000 yen, has been almost entirely credited to British Empire and American trade; and after the war the demand for machinery, tools, and more costly manufactures will be very exceptional.

Having traced historically the responsibility which has been incurred by Anglo-Saxondom, and more especially by England, in the up-building of modern Japan, it must be clear that the continuation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, until such time as Japan will possess the money, armies, and fleets sufficient

to be able to stand alone in the Eastern world without fear of any hostile combination being arrayed once more against her, is in some ways the duty which English statesmen must accept. But although the Alliance must be continued, it does not follow that its terms must be extended. If the extension is contemplated by England in order to accelerate the effacement of Great Britain in the extreme East, then every British subject in the Orient will be bitterly opposed to such a measure. Already England, in an official sense, is counted a sleeping quantity in China, content to lie snoring whilst others do the work. Already British gunboats and cruisers are being withdrawn from Chinese waters because there is apparently no such word as prestige in the text-books of efficiency. If this false policy is still more closely adhered to because Japan has proved herself invincible, and because the Alliance makes it for the time being dangerous for others to move, then, sooner than see ourselves eclipsed and relying on the Island Empire to do our work, it would be better to make an immediate end, as soon as an honourable end could be made, of all entangling alliances. We do not wish to wake up one day and find, like certain Roman Emperors, that the armour which we buckle on and the swords which we grasp are useless because dependence has emasculated us. Therefore, only the most searching inquiry by competent men can tell how far it will be wise for us to go in a matter which one day may be of transcendent importance.

CHAPTER XX

THE HEEL OF THE KOREAN BOOT

ONCE more back in uninteresting Shimonoseki, with the swirling green-black current pouring through the narrow straits, the high hills gloomily surveying the busy scene, and the grimy colliers from half the ports of the Far East flying flags of many maritime Powers, waiting their turn until the coal which stands mountain high under the shutes on the distant shore can be crashed in endless streams into the holds.

It is not so uninteresting, however, this coaling port in these great war-days, for the Shimonoseki Straits are the gates of Japan, and through them come hurrying both transports loaded with cheering troops longing to close with the enemy, and hospital-ships, sometimes merely clean and silent, and sometimes thick with human ants stricken whilst they were climbing up to Port Arthur or Nanshan, or to the great Manchurian passes, and now crawling home to get well if possible, and then die properly, as they should, on the grim battlefields. Then there are always torpedo-boats and despatch-vessels

racing in and out, and not staying a minute to hoot their greetings inshore. Chartered merchantmen, too, form processions flying their numbers, and tramps, who have owners loving speculation, follow at their heels loaded with palpable contraband — every kind of vessel engaged in feeding the war is hurriedly tooting across to and fro, and by day all Shimonoseki looks on.

Even at night, when all is dark, it is easy to see, for on either shore are huge, spluttering arc-lamps ranged on the water like the footlights of some gigantic theatre, which turn the water, never tired of racing at six knots an hour, so black and so treacherous that you see, as it were, the Kuro Shiwo, or famous gulf stream of Japan, coming up from the southern seas to lap the coasts and give them a sub-tropical vegetation, when by rights their climate should be rather extreme than temperate.

By daytime it is the hospital-ships I like to see as close as possible as they swing in from the Manchurian coasts, sometimes anchoring for the night. The wounded and sick escape from below, at least such as can persuade themselves that they can walk, hastily clamber up gangways, huddled in the ubiquitous red blanket that comforts but does not beautify, and then stand staring, massed on every coign of vantage on the ship — thus forming continuous blotches of red, with their eyes big with emotion at this their first sight of the Japan they had left never to return. All the sufferings of the great battlefields and the history of Japan's tremendous

effort seem to be written on the poor, huddled forms shrouded in red blankets as they troop past daily in their thousands and tens of thousands — a never ending procession of eloquent figures, silent, staring, maimed, broken, and uncheered, but not forgotten.

Forty years ago these Straits of Shimonoseki were the sport of bombarding war-vessels, when punishment had to be meted out on recalcitrant daimyos. Now, having learnt their lesson, they have been turned by fortification into impregnable sea-gates, and were all the Japanese fleet to be sunk to-morrow, no hostile ships or fleets would venture to push through and sully the beauty and defencelessness of the inland sea.

It is easy to see that the men on the hospital-ships are thinking of these things, for, lying in the stream as you come in from the Asiatic mainland, you look upon batteries half hidden on the wooded heights above and see gloomy muzzles peering down, the glint of bayonets and the suspicion of those concrete emplacements which defy all but the most powerful cannon. Flush with the water all is prosaic commercialism, but high up are the things which count when the prosaic is threatened, and towards these the men incline their heads. It is whispered in Japan that all Nagasaki, Shimonoseki, and Tokyo sea-forts were stripped of their best guns in the summer to help in the bombardment of doomed Port Arthur, and that, as in the case of the mined harbours, it is the moral fear that is counted upon to do the most work. But then

many things are being whispered now in Japan by excited people, more than half of which are not true.

The men on the Red Cross ships, back from the wars, look eagerly, and find, perhaps to their astonishment, that the world is still going much as usual, and that Japan is still the same. Only at Shimonoseki there is more bustle and a great hurrying about in sampans and launches of travellers bound for Korea, for which the army and the navy have to be thanked, since it is they who set the tide first flowing towards the hermit kingdom. People are crowding forward from many districts in Southern Japan, accompanied by whole families, who had far better have been left at home, to fulfil what Japan has come to suppose is her natural destiny — the colonisation of Korea. Every day steamers leave for the end of the Korean boot, to wit, Fusan, which is the heel, and every day fresh crowds of men, women, and children, belonging to every class, accompanied by veritable mountains of bamboo baskets, rug cover-alls, sacks and bags — all the light *impedimenta* for which the Japanese are famous — pass over to the promised land, much as the Russians poured into Manchuria by rail, to find that the hopes of rapid fortune-making were illusory.

The steamers which provide this Japan-Korean ferry service are not celebrated for their beauty, cleanliness, or comfort, and it is best to wait until the turn comes of one of the only two boats which boast of real passenger accommodation. The usual

steamer is of the diminutive cattle-boat type, and if you are brave enough to venture on such a craft with its crazy engines and its ominous roll, which seems merely to lurch the ship forward, you must herd it with a tribe of adventurers who are the dismay even of the Japanese police. These steamers, however, will soon be relics of the past, and in their place will come a daily service of handsome fifteen-knot ferry-boats, which will enable the journey to be made between Seoul and Tokyo by rail *viâ* the Korean Straits in less than fifty hours.

You leave Shimonoseki as the sun sets, and before it has risen again you are steaming into Fusan harbour. It is but 120 miles from port to port, and if you travel by day you have land in sight nearly all the way: for the big island of Tsushima stands sentry midway in the straits with dozens of outpost islands dotted near and far, so that but few miles of clear water are left on either side. It was here that the daring Vladivostock cruiser squadron rushed down and caught the Japanese transports on their way from Shimonoseki to Dalny, loaded with siege guns, platforms, and great stores of ammunition for Port Arthur, and sent the ill-fated *Hitachi-maru*, which had the richest cargo of all, to the bottom, whilst her consorts were hopelessly crippled. Close as has been the watch the Japanese secret service has kept in Japan, it did not prevent information being sent, *viâ* Shanghai and Peking, across Siberia to Vladivostock, and when the war is over some strange things will transpire.

As if to show that the most innocent questions asked, even by those whose passports place them above suspicion, are not relished, the purser of the ship provided me with a set of answers to some unimportant questions which signalled him out as the most consummate wooden-head ever born. He told me that he did not know the position of Korea, nor whether there was a war, nor who were the belligerents or why they were fighting, and by his gloomy manner filled me with a grave suspicion as to whether I was alive, or whether already embalmed. Some correspondents, possessed with a saving sense of humour, have made known to the world the absurd lengths to which this alleged secretiveness and discretion are carried, and it is high time now that every unimportant Japanese of no position realised that in his bosom no secrets repose which are worth surprising, and that a little more common sense would prevent this policy from defeating itself, as it actually has done on several occasions.

As your ship steams across an emerald sea, glassy and motionless, into the rocky arms of land stretched forth to receive you, you understand at once why Korea is called the Land of Morning Calm. By day, even with the rich, red sun rising, Korea is as the stars by night, cold, beautiful, but a little hopeless; rich, but with the land swept too clean. Above you, every profile and contour is as clear-cut as a cameo; below you the water is placid and peerless. It is, indeed, the land of morning calm with its white-clad

inhabitants in Eastern mourning for a joyous life which can never be theirs.

And coming from beautiful Japan with its sage-green harbours, wooded so thickly on the surrounding heights that the setting draws your attention more than the picture, Korea looks singularly forlorn, although it has a beauty which is peculiarly its own. Not a tree, excepting a few scant striplings which mournfully wave at the top of mountainous skylines and a few clumps of imported trees in the town of Fusan; no green vegetation spreads itself invitingly across the land — there is nothing but brown mother earth, with great boulders of fantastic and uncouth shape strewn about the desolate hills which rise above the harbour. When you come ashore you will discover, maybe, cultivation, but in the distance there is nothing but primitive Korea with no earth scratchings out of which grow abundant crops to enliven it.

It is comical to watch the expectant crowd of Japanese passengers who, after having passed an uncomfortable night in temporary encampments on the deck, have risen with the coming of dawn so that no sight of the promised land may be missed. They are wonder-struck that but a few miles of water should have brought such a change, and that familiar Japan should have given place to such unfamiliar sights. "It is very bald," complains one man. "The land is cold," says another man, encouragingly; "it is we who are going to heat it with the sun of Japan."

[*Face page* 486, *Vol. I.*

ALONG THE JAPANESE COAST.

It is still in a way half Japan, however, for a great crowd of Japanese fishing-boats and sailing ships are collected in Fusan harbour; the town itself, that is the modern town, is almost wholly Japanese, with pretty streets and cleanly houses, looking bright in the distance, and a familiar policeman, in the Eton jacket of unholy memory, comes off immediately the Customs have taken the ship's papers and places himself resolutely at the gangway, notebook in hand, the arbiter of all who wish to place their feet on *terra firma*. Nothing so quickly chases nostalgia as the sight of that inevitable policeman.

As the deck passengers file past him each is made to show his papers and submit to having his name, occupation, and town of origin duly recorded — and suspicious characters who have succeeded in evading the home police are summarily dealt with. Occasionally a man attempts to object and argues with the policeman. The latter then turns on the man with a grim martial-law look, and the ne'er-do-wells collapse hopelessly, stricken to the marrow — such is the power of the Japanese police.

Here in Fusan, as in other Japanese settlements along the coast of Korea of the ports thrown open to trade, the police are the envoys of the Japanese Consulates, which manage to control all the resident Japanese population very rigidly in spite of a nominal municipal government. Even when the policeman is satisfied, the Japanese emigrant is not free in Fusan; he is handed over to the tender

mercies of a ferry-boat company, which is a Japanese institution and possesses a monopoly enabling it to exact its pound of flesh from every new-comer, so that the Fusan harbour works may later on be completed.

The Japanese passengers are loaded, lamb-like, into big sampans, and they continue to be loaded in, together with their baskets, their cloth bags, their babies, and their wives, until only an inch or two of free-board remains. Then the sampan men, who are a mixed crew of Japanese and Koreans, yuloh slowly and condescendingly to the shore, which is but two hundred yards off, and for their services exact an exorbitant fee. As time is no object in Korea, I amused myself calculating the takings of a single boat-load; and to my surprise it amounted to twelve yen or twenty-four shillings, which, considering the purchasing value of money in the Far East, represents a five-pound note in England. A few weeks in Korea brought numberless cases of similar extortions, always possible because of virtual monopolies, before my eyes; barbers charging a yen for shaving you; rickshaws pulled by Japanese demanding minimum fares of two or three yen; everyone attempting to seize fortune by the forelock and thus enable themselves to return home rich.

Once on shore in Fusan you can exhaust the possibilities of the place very rapidly. Fusan is almost entirely Japanese in every respect, and the few thousand Koreans who live within the port limits have to adapt themselves to Japanese ways.

The Japanese Consulate takes the place of all the authorities who usually control such large populations, and, excepting the Chinese Consulate, there is no other nationality officially represented in the town.

The little settlement of former years has grown in an astonishing manner since the war, and shows an affluence which promises to increase largely, once the railway has linked it to Seoul and the Northern provinces and converted it in the place of Dalny into the real terminus of the Asiatic continent. The actual Japanese population is 12,000 at the moment, whilst the fishing population of Southern Korea, which makes Fusan its headquarters, is now estimated to exceed 20,000. A huge harbour and reclamation scheme is in progress, and when it is finished in 1906, Fusan will have admirable railway wharves, from which loading and unloading will proceed on the most up-to-date principles. At present the steamers lie out in the stream, and the whole raised and bunded foreshore, which will one day be crowded with godowns and warehouses, is covered with light railway tracks. Wild-looking Koreans, with their top-knots streaming out behind them in the wind, come coasting down on lorries loaded with mud from the hills behind the town, and dump their cargoes on the fast-completing works with shouts which astonish you. Here in Fusan the Japanese coolie is no longer the unskilled labourer he is in Japan — he has blossomed into a shift-boss, controlling labour and seeing that it keeps up to the required level by the use of

vigorous language sometimes backed by a thick stick. It is the only method for the Korean, who, distinguished among all the men of this earth for his listlessness and utter lack of interest excepting in his immediate surroundings, will not move unless he is coerced. How jealous would the *lazzaroni* of Naples become could they but behold the peaceful laziness of their Korean brothers!

In the town, however, an hour after landing you are convinced that the Japanese have at least succeeded at the treaty port settlements in drilling the natives to an appreciable extent. In Fusan you will find mixed Korean-Japanese shops which have a briskness you do not find even in modern Japan. In such establishments, where the sale of cotton cloth is the principal item of trade, a sharp buying and selling is always proceeding. Already the railway, whose fares are very moderate, is bringing down numbers of farmers loaded with the detestable nickel coin of the country (which is the despair of financiers), and sees them make their season's purchases in Fusan instead of waiting until pedlars appear at their doors, as was the former custom. It is an instructive sight to see the counting out of several stones' weight of these nickels in payment for a small consignment of piece-goods. Everybody lends a willing hand; the nickels are stacked up in imposing piles, the piles grow into great parcels of coin, and when the intelligent stranger would imagine that a fortune lay before his eyes, there is hardly the price of a five-pound note.

All this, however, makes for a brisk trade, and the Fusan Customs receipts have shown a remarkable and well-sustained increase since the war and the building of the railway. At the end of 1904 the monthly receipts are already exceeding forty thousand yen a month, which means that Fusan will soon have a yearly Customs revenue of half a million yen a month, making it easily the second port of the peninsula in commercial importance.

Beyond the Fusan settlement limits, however, you soon see how much there is to do in the country and how little so far accomplished. Out on the country bridle-tracks Korean men of the farmer class stride leisurely along in their picturesque clothing of spotless white and their eminently respectable top-hats. No haste is theirs but only sauntering; they are the gentlemen of the Far East — they are everything that is nice; and then, just as you have succeeded in placing them on the pinnacle of everything refined, you see them disappear into wretched hovels, the like of which does not exist even in China, apparently without any feeling at all on the subject. Surely to have his proper setting the stately Korean should enter a commodious club where, picking up the local equivalent of the *Times*, he would pass leisurely hours in the perusal of the news from the nickel-market. For never was there such a race of gentlemen in looks, preliminary manner, carriage, and general mien as the Koreans, and it is small wonder that a large part of the male population is a leisure class of the most pronounced

type. Then the little boys look like little girls, and when the real girls appear, a feeling of bashfulness overcomes one at the successful *décolletage* which begins with the breasts and only ends with the waist.

Strolling out beyond Fusan you come on the rabbit warrens of huts which, huddled together in the hollows of hillsides, are dignified by the name of villages. From behind closed doors and windows comes a constant soft buzzing of voices. If you step too near and succeed in arousing curiosity by your unsuspected presence, the voices suddenly cease, the door-windows are as suddenly pushed open, and you see to your surprise that your animal simile is extraordinarily good. A whole litter of eminently respectable persons with their top-hats on are all seated so close and so compactly together that tinned sardines would be jealous. The litter of respectable persons surveys you with an unblinking, placid curiosity, the voices stilled by fear into silence. There are perhaps from ten to fifteen persons in as many square feet of house, and streaks of smoke arising from a like number of pipes thicken the atmosphere. Yes, you feel inclined most certainly to root up one of the convenient cabbages, which can be reached by hanging out of the windows, and approaching near very carefully tender the vegetable for a friendly nibble. Oh, wonderful Koreans, the most patient, the most stately, and withal the most strong-smelling people in the world, what are you always thinking and talking about!

Scattered round the country, these humble dwellings impress you, twenty-four hours after arriving in Fusan, with the difficulty of the Japanese problem; for there is so little tangible, so little development in Korea, the people have such a *vis inertiæ* of hopelessness, that you grasp only at air.

There are countless mountain-ranges and barren hills, hundreds of thousands of huts, a few cities, a lesser number of beautiful hermit temples which have survived from a happier age; lots of brawn and muscle which labour ox-like on the fields and roads and — nothing else. Over this slow, mulish, deliberate, stubborn nation rules a corrupt Court and an impotent Emperor, both of whom, allied over the Japanese question, bring every exasperating quality into play to block everything which is not huts, mountains, and hills, white baggy garments, spurious nickels, tobacco and rice — in a word, the very devil of a conservative country, which wishes and is determined to learn nothing new if brute-force can oppose it.

But the pleasant town of Fusan, lying basking in the sun with its clean streets and its purely Japanese aspect, is concerned only with trade and cares not for abstract questions. There are but few Europeans here in Fusan; two or three in the Korean Customs, four or five missionaries, and perhaps an occasional traveller or sportsman passing as quickly as he can into the interior. The town is even gloriously devoid of a good Japanese hotel, but the railway authorities are going to remedy that, and a Euro-

pean railway hotel will shortly welcome the through traveller.

Four miles from Fusan is old Fusan, which is rather like old Harbin in Manchuria; the skeleton and bones of a former brisk life with nothing worth seeing at the present moment. These old Korean towns testify to happier days. Solid gateways of stone and the remains of city walls, and dilapidated official buildings of Chinese appearance, have generally managed to survive from the fate of being submerged in the sea of huts clustering thickly around; whilst, abundant on the ground, broken stone monuments watch the years pass by with listless unconcern which comes of extreme neglect.

A score of miles to the west of Fusan lies the peerless harbour of Masampo, one of the great Russo-Japanese questions, temporarily but not really solved before the war. Masampo was the necessary complement to Port Arthur, just as the impregnable fortress played the same part to Vladivostock. With Vladivostock alone in her grasp, Russia had only dipped the claws of her great paws into the element which she has so long wooed in vain — the sea. When Port Arthur was acquired, one paw was well in the water; but without another strong place nearer her Pacific province, it was impossible for her to balance herself on the edge of the sea without falling helplessly in. Masampo, after endless intrigue, in which Monsieur Pavlow, crowned with the laurels of the Port Arthur lease, overexerted himself, and made the Japanese too sus-

picious for success to be possible, was formally opened to trade in 1899, and it was seemingly useless for Russian men-of-war and vessels of the Volunteer Fleet to nibble at it any longer. But the Russians never quite abandoned their hopes, and had the 1903–1904 Alexeieff negotiations been successful, there is no doubt that one fine day an enormous Russian squadron would have appeared off the end of the Korean peninsula, sent a landing party ashore, hoisted the northern tricolour, and with a nominal lease from the Korean puppet-Emperor in their pockets, defied Japan, as they were willing to defy her until retribution overtook them. Up to the very moment the first shot was fired the Russians were busily intriguing on this heel of the Korean boot. Fusan boasted of a Russian Consul in the old days; the Russian Consul was linked with Port Arthur on one side and Vladivostock on the other by the constantly passing steamers of the Volunteer and Chinese Eastern Railway fleets. And because these were not sufficient to keep watch and report what was going on, the mosquito whaling-fleet of Norwegian-Russian vessels, which made Nagasaki their headquarters, formed a species of auxiliary intelligence corps and kept inconveniently crawling into every bay and inlet along the indented Korean coast to see that the Japanese were not stealing a march on their rivals. And yet with all this wonderful spying and counter-spying, the 6th of February found the Russians here in the middle of the greatest danger-

zone, utterly surprised and unprepared, as will be shown later — and under the sharp and accurate blows of a well-prepared Japan, the dreams of a foothold in Southern Korea have vanished never to return.

Meanwhile Japan has not let the grass grow under her feet during 1904 — at least here in Southern Korea. Masampo is now practically a hermetically sealed port as far as the general public is concerned. It was never a commercial port in any sense of the word, and its opening in 1899 to foreign trade was merely a diplomatic move forced on the Korean Government to stay the ceaseless Pavlow intrigues. Nobody knows exactly what the Japanese are doing at Masampo, but it is reported that fortifying has been going on steadily and methodically for nine months, and that in a year Masampo can be made really impregnable. It has been said that Port Arthur was equal to seven Sebastopols and two Gibraltars. Well, then, with but little work, comparatively speaking, Masampo can be converted into a fortress and land-locked naval base equal to two or three Port Arthurs. It has been my privilege to see Masampo before its sealing, and it may be safely said that it is probably the strongest natural fortress and the most perfect naval base in the entire world. There is deep blue water all over the harbour in which a Japanese naval officer has calculated hundreds of war vessels might lie, and even manœuvre with perfect safety. The entrances are so perfect and so masked; and they are

commanded by the towering heights which look down on the Korean Straits, so that no guns could bombard a beleaguered fleet from out at sea as Togo has repeatedly done at Port Arthur. Inland, mountain range succeeds mountain range, mile after mile, making an approach from the land side sheer annihilation. Between Port Arthur and Masampo there is no comparison possible. The first is full of faults, whilst the second is peerless and flawless, and intrenched here a Japanese garrison could defy the entire world for years. It is easy to understand the Russian intrigue.

The moral is clear. The great Far Eastern war has given birth to a second Dardanelles through which no hostile Russian or other fleet will ever be allowed to pass by the Japanese — except one. With Sasebo and the fortified Japanese coast on one side, and the big island of Tsushima in the very centre of the channel, the Korean Straits, although one hundred miles broad, become a Japanese gateway almost as safe and as secure (with the greatly enlarged post-bellum fleet which will be seen) as the Straits of Shimonoseki themselves. With Fusan an important commercial port, boasting of perhaps thirty or forty thousand Japanese inhabitants, and the Pacific Railway terminus for the continent of Asia, as it will be when the Fusan-Seoul-Wiju Railway is carried across Southern Manchuria to Liaoyang; with a fast flowing tide of passengers and trade passing across the Korean Straits, and with Masampo

ceded to Japan and standing alert like an armed sentinel, the problem of the heel of the Korean boot which has been perplexing diplomats for long years past will be definitely solved. No matter what happens elsewhere, Japan will now be sure that the arrow which has pointed so long at her heart has its barb removed and hurled away, and that the bow which was to discharge this venomous dart is damaged beyond hope of repair.

CHAPTER XXI

FROM FUSAN TO SEOUL BY RAIL

Two or three miles to the east of Fusan is the railway terminus. As is the case with all Far Eastern railways in their earlier stages, it is you who have to accommodate the railway by searching it out along weary roads, and not the railway which comes to you. Later on, when trade and traffic justify it, the railway may condescend to push its stations a little nearer to where they are wanted; but in the initial stages a Russian-like indifference to your comfort is shown, and you must trudge through dust and dirt to the proud iron-horse.

The Seoul-Fusan Railway Company, officially known as the Keifu Railway, has the head office of its southern section at the Fusan terminus in a white European building, curiously unlike the rest of Fusan. You are received by a manager in a black coat, who belongs to another world, and does not identify himself with the town, the locality, its people, or its aspirations. He is there for a specific object, and his own world is too crowded for any time to be left to look at any others. It is the same

with all railway companies all over the new Far East: a syndicate is formed, a big concession is obtained, and then men come in black coats from one of the chief cities of the world. Half get into khaki coats and push up-country with the rail advance, whilst the staff merely remain in their black clothes, run up hasty offices at the termini, remain for a space working frantically in a life apart from the ordinary life of the place, and then, as soon as the construction is completed, all repack their portmanteaus and bags and disappear in their sober clothes: flitting phantoms that have impressed an image of the West indelibly on a tiny portion of the East — phantoms knowing as little of the country when they leave as when they came, simply because the business of fitting iron rails neatly together over hill, river, and dale is very arduous, and leaves no time to look at the landscape.

The Japanese manager of the southern section was as other men engaged in this business — very busy, more polite than his European prototypes, and eternally worried over the slow progress of the construction parties. But in spite of this his answers were very satisfactory. Yes, I could go forward at once, to-morrow at seven in the morning if I liked, and here was my travelling schedule; fifty miles by regular passenger train, thirty by ballast train, and 76·8 by construction train. Then a halt and 18·6 miles over a break on pony-back; then, more weary miles by construction, ballast, and regular trains until the Korean capital would heave in sight

FUSAN HARBOUR.

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on the evening of the fourth day at mile 274·5. It was wonderfully precise and much better than the Hankow-Peking Belgian road, where they wave their arms over their heads and tell you, Mon Dieu! they have no idea when, where, or how you can go forward, except perhaps by trolley. The last, which sounds delightful, is more exhausting on close acquaintance than ballast train riding, for the half-naked coolies soon pant and breathe behind your ears like stricken exhaust-valves, and you know that human power is very limited.

At seven in the morning I was once more at the Fusan station. The sun had risen more splendid than I had seen him for many weeks. It was the sun of Manchuria — the big, strong, clean sun with no sins and no regrets, which brings victories to the righteous, and in its bright rays the water and mountains around laughed back with a freedom which was infectious. Behind us lay Fusan harbour, with its placid waters and rugged heights, and steaming or sailing out to sea little steamers and small fishing craft left gleaming wakes behind them sparkling in the sun. About the station, Korean gentlemen-farmers — never was a term better deserved — in their eminently respectable top-hats were in great numbers, presumably travelling back from clubland to less appropriate abodes, each one armed with formidable bundles, which ill-became their stately appearance. The nickel-made purchases were also travelling back.

Luck, too, favoured me from the start. The chief

engineer of the southern section was leaving by the same train to meet the chief engineer of the northern section with mathematical precision at mile 136·25, which is half-way, presumably, calculated to six places of decimals. At five o'clock on the evening of the second day, he informed me, each section engineer would appear with his staff at the half-way house, mounted on Korean ponies. They would dismount, take hot baths, settle the exact hour the last spikes were to be driven, sleep, then return to their respective termini and wait for the telegraph to tick back the news of the meeting of the rails at the front. Then each in turn would telegraph the news to the Tokyo head-office in such a manner that their telegrams would arrive simultaneously, and the Seoul-Fusan Railway would be officially complete. Perhaps — here the chief engineer smiled deprecatingly, and became almost bashful — this would happen on the 3rd of November, which is the Emperor's birthday, and very lucky, but it would be very difficult to know just now. Japan is well served by her sons even in the small things which really mean so much though they are small.

Meanwhile, the respectable gentlemen-farmers had apparently settled all outstanding disputes for the time being as to the purchasing value of nickels, and had taken their places noisily in the train. A last remaining individual, who was apparently testing the forbearance and good nature of the locomotive by pushing his head and his arms under the wheels whilst the driver was pulling the levers, was rescued at the

eleventh hour, and led away protesting that he did not yet fully understand the mechanism. The Korean is indeed a child of nature, and beside him the most ignorant Chinaman is a Solomon amongst men. The engine, a powerful Baldwin, shrieked, we panted quicker and quicker, and Fusan faded behind us.

It required but little observation to see the nature of the difficulties which the Japanese engineers have had to overcome in building the Korean Grand Trunk line. It is all grading work, demanding careful treatment, but not presenting any real engineering difficulty. From the moment you leave the Fusan terminus to the moment you pull up at night your locomotive is either panting up steep inclines or sliding easily round beautiful serpent-like curves on a down-grade. Hills and mountains surround you on all sides, sometimes towering high above you in lofty peaks of savage aspect, sometimes mere shoulders of rock that hunch themselves angrily along the path of the iron horse. There is not an inch of plain to be seen. On the southern section of the railway there are no great feats, excepting a four-thousand-foot tunnel, which is being pierced through granite rock at a phenomenal rate; but in spite of this there has been a great opportunity for neat and careful work. And splendidly have the Japanese engineers attended to their business. From Fusan to rail-head the work is perfect, equalling, if it does not exceed, the excellence of the newly constructed German Shantung line.

The stations succeed one another with great rapidity, the average distance along the entire line which separates them being only five and a half miles. For many miles north of Fusan the station-buildings are all completed, and are exact replicas of the ordinary station in Japan. At each a uniformed Japanese station-master is already in command; and under him Koreans in half-Japanese costume, but with their top-knots still intact, are being trained to do the rough work. So far, however, all duties which demand intelligence and watchfulness are carried out by Japanese *employés*, but in time it is hoped that the natives will be able to take over much of the work, which is now paid for at rates greatly in excess of those obtaining in Japan. Already in Fusan I had noticed one thing which one might have sought in vain a few years ago: the success with which young Korean boys were being trained by Japanese shopkeepers and traders, and the extraordinary change which close contact with wide-awake Japanese has made in their appearance, intelligence, and quickness. The Japanese will never be able to accomplish much with the present generation of grown-up Koreans, but if the youth of the country are taken properly in hand and carefully trained, most surprising results may be seen.

Meanwhile, steaming rapidly over a splendid rock-bed, we at last debouched into the valley of the Nak-tung, and for a number of miles travelled almost on the edge of this beautiful river, which

winds itself entrancingly through cool mountain gorges, stately and serene as no Chinese waters could be. Who could do justice to the beauty of Korean rivers? With eyes tired by the everlasting muddiness of Chinese waters and the swirling rapids of Japanese streams it is a veritable feast of the senses to look until you can look no more on the beautiful calm and limpid waters of Korea. The sun above you shines hotly and throws everything into strong relief; the mountains and hills in the dazzlingly clear atmosphere seem to push so near you that you can almost stroke their rugged faces kindly with your hands. A few white-clad Koreans wander about to complete the landscape; and then below you a blue river flows — not of a blue which is an imitation blue, but a divine sky-blue which comes because the heavens are reflected in the waters, and because the polished stone-bed of the river is as clean as the robes of a vestal virgin. Occasionally a brown Korean boat with picturesque white sails floats down the waters laden with rice; the boatmen, spying friendly people on the banks, chant their greetings in the high-pitched voices of the natives of India, and all, draped in their flowing white, gesticulate gravely to one another with shy laughter as our train rushes by. . . .

In these calm and peaceful surroundings even our Baldwin engine, symbol of a land of hustle and hurry, became sedate and deliberate, and puff, puff, steadily and solemnly as it climbed ever onward, informed the spirits of the rivers and the mountains

that its progress would in no wise disturb them. The Japanese chief engineer and his men surveyed the scene with the half-closed eyes of the Eastern artist who loves delicate shading, as no other man loves; for to look on the blue Nak-tung in the golden-yellow sunshine is to be recompensed for many days' exile from beautiful Japan. Thus progressing, the hours passed very fast. Korean passengers mounted and dismounted, but it could be easily seen that the great passenger traffic along the southern section will be in the future rather between up-country stations and the terminus, Fusan, than in shorter stretches; for many years must elapse before the Korean becomes accustomed to the idea that it is cheaper and quicker to travel between inland points by rail instead of by pony or on foot. By noon we reached the limit of the track opened to regular traffic, and, received by a bowing station-master and his wife, we fared famously on river trout, Sapporo black beer, and bowls of soup and rice.

"Now, construction and ballast trains," said the chief engineer, laconically. We stowed our traps on the top of the rails that bore the mystic word Carnegie, proclaiming that the United States Steel Corporation is profiting much by Korean railway building; and, shrouding ourselves in the inevitable red blanket of Japan, the motley expedition of engineers, small traders, tea-house girls, and railroad men prepared to face the wind which cuts so viciously when nothing fends it from one.

The river had been by now left far to the west of

us, and the country had become more and more rugged. Cultivation, which had been scant even in the immediate vicinity of Fusan, became less and less noticeable; and only in the bottom of tiny valleys could small collections of toadstool huts be seen, surrounded by patches of paddy-fields. Occasionally, goatherds leading diminutive flocks detached themselves from the brown background and moved forward, vague specks on the vast expanse of hilly country that surrounded them; but apart from these there was not a soul to be seen. It is hard to see how much development can be made in the midst of such surroundings, even though the Japanese Government has the best will in the world. By carrying water higher up the slopes of hills, irrigation may make a little more rice-land; but it is certain that no Japanese for many years to come will be willing to exile themselves to such *triste* and lonely neighbourhoods. A Japanese trader, spying out the land, whom I had not suspected of such accomplishments, turned to me and said in the English of the commercial schools, "It is with great difficulty that commerce and industry can flourish here," in which obvious pronouncement I immediately concurred. The educated Japanese is not going to be led away by the opinion which so many who do not know the land of Korea express: that the whole country must be immediately colonised. The Japanese will gravitate naturally first to the towns and villages, and only later on may they be looked for in the country districts.

But there was little time for discussion or reflection. Ahead, a formidable mountain range reared itself across our path. There was no narrow valley to the right or left for us to slip through as we had been doing all day long in the face of such difficulties. What would we do? "Tunnel," grunted a Japanese shift-boss in the picturesque character-splashed coat of his country, proud of his one word of English; "Switchback, switchback," called another. It was even so. We drew up at the bottom, where a large temporary encampment of engineers, skilled labourers, and coolies was scattered irregularly over the ground, and jumped down, pleased of an opportunity to limber up our stiffened limbs. Smoke was rising from brick-kilns and a huckster's lean-to; the clang of hammer and anvil resounded sharply in the still air — it was the big four-thousand-foot tunnel — the Sho-ken tunnel, on which work was being pushed forward day and night.

We waited some time whilst the chief engineer made a hurried inspection and the train was being split in two. Small construction-engines busily panted themselves to death, sorting and re-sorting the heavily loaded trucks we had brought up, until at last a fine residuum of steel rails was all that was left. A red and white tunnel-mouth, unsullied as yet by smoke, showed where the permanent way would go; but right up the steep slope of the mountain a brown snake of embankment curved and recurved until it was lost at the summit. It was the famous switchback, of

which the whole Seoul-Fusan Railway staff is so proud.

Presently we were off, an engine in front of us and another behind, and with a flying start on the level we sped up. It was beautifully calculated, for just as our speed was fast sinking to zero and the diminutive Baldwins were breaking their iron lungs in the weight-lifting struggle we fetched No. 1 switch and slid easily round on a shunt-track. Then a Japanese switchman ran out of a wooden box, put the switchboard over, waved a green flag at us, and with another tremendous full-speed start we made our way ever higher along a half-moon of iron rails. Three times we repeated the operation, and then, lo and behold! we were on top of the mountain, a thousand feet above the sea-level.

What a view lay before us! Korea was spread out like a vast contour map, with hills and mountains undulating away in every direction, a desolate, barren hill-land with the sparkle of flowing water in many places, but hardly a tree, excepting a few stunted pines and a little scrub-oak. Up the face of the mountain we had ascended, the switchbacks slid down in beautifully rounded curves that looked like an unauthorised phantasy of a giant letter S; on the other side, down which we were already gliding with Westinghouse brakes straining at our too willing wheels, there were no less than five switches, each one bringing us a few hundred feet nearer the valley, and each controlled by a blue-trousered, check-shirted Japanese.

At the bottom another large encampment with dozens of Japanese and many hundreds of Koreans in much-soiled clothes working trollies and lorries, and mightily busy over the tunnelling work, which must be quickly completed at all cost. Before the middle of 1905 the entire permanent way will be in perfect order, a record for Japanese engineers, seeing that the work has only been seriously taken in hand since March of 1904.

Thus, dust and soot covered, we accomplished twelve miles more, and at half-past four drew up at the big station of Taiku, eighty miles from Fusan and a third of the way from Seoul. It had been a long day.

Already Taiku station, which marks the end of the very mountainous country and the opening out into miniature valleys, has assumed an important look, and a great deal of building has gone on. Engine-sheds and repair-shops, station buildings and quarters for the railway staff, together with a number of miscellaneous buildings in the Japanese style, were spread out irregularly over a large tract of ground, and for the first time since leaving Fusan there were some evidences of a Japanese population unconnected with the railway. We were conducted to a set of Japanese guest-rooms, clean and spotless as only new buildings of wood fitted with such light things as straw-mats and paper-clad doors can be, and after a boiling Japanese bath we set out to explore the city behind us.

Taiku is one of the half dozen Korean towns

A Street in Japanese Fusan.

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The Town of Taiku.

which are held to justify the name of city. It is surrounded by a solid city-wall, still in a state of good preservation and possessing four gates of respectable dimensions crowned by miniature gate-houses. Once inside the walls, however, you are disappointed. Mean streets of toadstool huts succeed one another with endless monotony — huts crowded with many people all talking volubly, who stop suddenly after the Fusan manner and remain very still, exactly like rabbits, directly they catch sight of the foreigner. A young assistant engineer fresh from the Tokyo schools had been told off as guide, and led us after a quarter of an hour's walk, with a certain grim sarcasm, to the Korean city governor's residence, as an example of what Japan was going to reform. The residence was simply an old-fashioned Chinese Yamen dating from the days of long ago, and there was absolutely nothing to see but dilapidation and decay. In the courtyards the governor's servants and retainers were amusing themselves in a way which would have brought contempt on the face of a Bushman. A crowd of them, in the coloured coats of official servants, took it in turns to wave a long wooden stave in the air, and then, feigning to bring it down as hard as they could on the ground, suddenly stopped the blow just before it reached *terra firma*. It was apparently immensely amusing from the Korean official servant's point of view, for everyone laughed with the colourless Korean laughter the whole time. Such pastimes meriting encouragement, we selected the most

foolish-looking and tried to introduce a variety of the game, which would make it as bridge is to whist. Placing the not unwilling Korean head on the ground we invited the others to continue, and soon we were able to continue our stroll with the satisfied feeling which only comes to those who have successfully created discord in a happy if foolish family.

The city walls, the city gates, the governor's Yamen, and a broken-down temple which we afterwards found, all owe their existence to the former Chinese *régime*. The walls are many hundreds of years old; the buildings are more modern, but all are pure Chinese and have nothing of present-day Korea about them.

A few yards farther on we came on barracks where the local Korean garrison was cooped. The garrison was an integral part of the modern Korean army which has pretended to be so indignant about the Japanese invasion. It therefore merited inspection. But on our attempting to enter the barracks, the Korean sentry presented his bayonet at our chests, and as he appeared to be overpowered by the manœuvring of a heavy rifle, discretion was the better part of valour. We asked for the local general, and it was not until the latter gentleman had been sought out that we were permitted to enter.

The general had apparently been roused from a pleasant siesta, and was struggling moodily with his official trousers. The process must have been a painful one, for he abandoned it as soon as he

caught sight of us, and with a shrug of his shoulders ordered his overcoat instead. With this sign of rank thrown over him he greeted us cordially enough in his stockinged feet from the top of a little verandah. He seemed a pleasant enough man on whom the unkind fates had thrust this soldiering business for no special reason, and, smiling at us benignly, waved his hands about him invitingly for a space. So we proceeded to inspect.

The Korean Barrack Act — if any such enactment was passed when the wondrous Korean modern army sprang into existence — must have been one of the most economical laws ever framed. From a hasty investigation the *modus operandi* of giving effect to its provisions must have been as follows. A search was made round each city to discover where the majority of inns and pony-stables lay. As soon as this was discovered the owners were expropriated, all the inns and surrounding buildings excepting the stables torn down, and then, using the materials thus acquired, the pony stalls were joined up so as to form continuous lines. Finally, the whole was surrounded with a compound wall; and, adding a few pitch-forks of dirt, your barracks were complete, and not only redolent with anti-consumption smells, but blessed with a magnificent drill-ground in the centre. Korea is indeed a delightful country.

It would also appear that so long as the Korean soldier can drill, he is entirely happy. His pay may

be outstanding for years, his stomach may be rather empty, but concede to him the privilege of double and even treble drills, and all the other ills to which his flesh is heir are borne by him without a murmur. Here in desolate Taiku, a "lost" inland town of Korea, they were drilling and redrilling although the night was coming on, and they had been at it since early morn. Clad in uniforms which reminded one oddly of the Japanese, they were marching, squad-firing, and preparing for every manner of attack, whilst a strident bugling echoed over the town. Poor Korean people, whose fate at last appears to be sealed, your soldiery, if they had but drilled in this way years ago in far greater numbers, might have prevented all the tragedies of the last decade!

Passing out, we made our way back through the town, and crossed on the road numbers of Japanese soldiers returning to camp outside the city. It is startling to see the similarity between the soldiery of the conquerors and the conquered — in the distance they appear much alike; but whilst the Korean, chosen from the most unsuitable class, is tall and weak-looking, the Japanese is stocky and very heavily built, and his physique appears to improve daily with military discipline and the big rations he receives.

The Japanese quarter of Taiku, to which we now made our way, is not a very inspiring sight. There are supposed to be 700 or 800 immigrants here, but the number is constantly diminishing, and until

substantial enterprises are started, backed by capitalists, these first-comers will have a hard time. In the summer it appears that the town of Taiku apparently had something in the nature of a boom when the rails reached thus far north. Then as many as two or three thousand Japanese poured into the place to see what was to be done in the way of colonising. But a few weeks convinced all but the most hardy and resolute that there was no money to be made for the time being, and so the stream flowed back again to Fusan or farther north. The few hundred who remain have rented Korean huts and adapted them to Japanese use as best they can by a process of cleaning and repapering. This small colony, which may be taken as representative of what is going on in many small towns all over Korea at the present moment, is composed of a few tailors, rice-dealers, pastry-cooks, piece-goods dealers, and a handful of others who sell very cheap general commodities; but all told us they were making slow headway. A little thing caught my attention as showing the Japanese spirit and love of country which is so remarkable in a Far Eastern people. A pastry-cook, having finished the day's work, had gathered all the Japanese children and babies of the neighbourhood around him in his poor little shop, and, book in hand, was teaching them all to sing the national songs. Little boys and little girls made as much noise as their baby-lungs would allow; and in the dusk, with a single flickering candle lighting them, they made a curious picture,

eloquent of the future and of the spirit of the advance-guard now sweeping into Korea.

We had now not much time to tarry, for night was fast coming on. Outside the city limits Roman Catholic and Protestant churches and buildings stood together on well-raised ground. The French and American missionaries, who thrive exceedingly in Korea, have certainly chosen the best sites in this neighbourhood, as indeed they always do, and from their chapels the country about Taiku is commanded for many miles around. The American, being the more enterprising, has bought and fenced off a whole hill-side with the barbed wire now so *à la mode*, and, as my little Japanese guide put it, "he is singularly fortunate in his foresight."

As a contrast to the affluent churches of the West we came soon in the half-gloom on a dilapidated temple. A piece of old matting spread out into the street gave notice to all Far Easters that something was going to happen. We inquired: it was nothing less than the Governor and all his suite coming to pay their respects to the *manes* of some departed Emperor — a ceremony which was certainly well worth waiting for. Whilst standing there, two gaily dressed Korean singing-girls sidled along attired in a green and mauve that caught the eye immediately in the drab-coloured streets with their white ghosts of people. "Dear sir," lisped the little attendant Japanese in the quaint language of the business letter-writer adapted to the special circumstances of the case, "I regret that these

are women of ill-fame; do you reckon them more beautiful than those of my country?" to which I answered a resolute negative.

Bang! went a distant gong, interrupting unceremoniously this unconventional debate; bang! sounded the gong nearer and nearer, and added to this din came a distant shouting. The great man himself was appearing. A long line of official servants, the very same we had incited to strike one another, hove in sight marching in a disorderly double file. As soon as they reached the temple door they halted, opened up, faced around, and down the middle came the Governor in his tiger-skin-covered chair, borne by four bearers who gasped as they carried him. He was a bloodless, soulless, and feeble-looking personage, and appeared ill at ease as soon as he discovered that he was being watched.

Meanwhile an attendant was trying to clear the temple courtyard of the Korean crowd; but no sooner had one lot been driven away than another came piling in. In the midst of this indecorous struggle the Governor stood helpless, waiting for a pathway to be made. Finally he was able to walk in, and, joined by a single priest, the two men advanced together to the dilapidated altars. The ceremony which followed was only grotesque. Both Governor and priest slow-marched after the Buddhist fashion in different directions, facing East, West, South, and North (the Chinese Tung-Hsi-Nan-Pei) at regular intervals and calling loudly

"Kang-hsi." I tried to discover the meaning of these words by inviting Korean farmers and others around to write the characters on the ground. But sucking resolutely at their pipes they shook their heads, and the mystery remained unsolved.

Presently the Governor, having completed his duty as rapidly as possible, mounted his chair again, and amidst loud shouts was borne away to his life of laziness and sloth. As night fell we gained the station-cantonments. Taiku had been thoroughly explored and in two short hours each of the main features of Korea in the present year of grace had been presented to our eyes: the feeble and dissolute Governor and his parasite servants; the docile population of sixty thousand people dwelling in a city of huts; the European churches and the Korean temple; the Korean soldiery still busily drilling and the Japanese army of occupation not even noticing such antics; the settlers from across the Tsushima straits attempting to find a livelihood in an undeveloped country possessing no capital or money; the modern railway passing by the archaic gates; the singing-girls and solitude — each had fitted in its little part. It was dreary dull, in all truth.

Daylight found us afoot, and by seven we were once more moving forward on a very mixed train, piled with rails, building bricks, and timbers, and with all sorts of Japanese adventurers with their heads tied up picturesquely in coloured cloths to protect them from the bitter wind which chills even when you lumber forward at but a dozen miles an

On the Seoul-Fusan Railway.

On the Seoul-Fusan Railway.

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hour. To-day we would make only sixty miles by train, but a sharp pony ride awaited us at rail-head.

The mountains and hills of the day before had now smoothed away somewhat, but still there were only rolling elevations and narrow valleys. Taiku has grown up to the importance it possesses (from the Korean point of view) simply owing to its fortunate natural position. A great number of rice-fields surround it and the town marks the end of the very mountainous country from Fusan and the beginning of an agricultural district.

Going along the road to Seoul, the railway follows a broad valley, which sometimes broadens out until it is many miles wide. Rice-fields cover every inch of arable land and villages succeed one another with the regularity and monotony of China. Cotton, also, I saw here for the first time since leaving Fusan, and the vegetation, which had been so scant all the way from the terminus, began to be more luxuriant. Scrub-oak and pine-trees of somewhat miserable appearance dotted the country, and around the villages fruit trees stood in increasing numbers. It seems, therefore, to me that the extreme south of Korea resembles the extreme south of the Liaotung, and that as you progress north the country becomes richer. Taiku at miles 77·6 from Fusan is doubtless destined to be the Korean equivalent of Liaoyang when Japanese capital is forthcoming.

A few miles north of here the stations no longer existed even in the embryo stage. Their future sites were merely marked by small piles of materials

and the lonely huts of a few Japanese workmen. The one great object of the Japanese has been to hurry up the rail connection, so that in the event of later reverses at sea the Tsushima straits alone need carry Japanese transports, and the railway connection with Manchuria do the rest. Thus everything except the strictly necessary is being left until later on.

At twelve we tiffined hastily whilst our engine gurgled down water from a great Japanese tub mounted on a high wooden staging. Korean coolies, gently urged by a determined-looking Japanese, were pumping water with extraordinary energy. Once more on again for an hour or two, always more and more cautiously, for the ballasting-work was far behind us now and we were running over naked sleepers on which the rails had hardly been pinned; and finally at two o'clock a mass of Japanese workmen in their blue-and-white shirts loomed up across our way. It was rail-head absolute.

We jumped off and ran down the steep embankment to the ponies which were waiting for us; and almost before we had moved, rails and ties were clanging off the construction train by the hundred, whilst dozens of willing hands were carrying, laying, and riveting up as fast as they could proceed, with the locomotive, constantly hooting, moving slowly forward as it felt the road growing beneath its feet. Here the embankments had been carried to a great height, higher even than on the Manchurian railway, where they rise far above the level of the country; for no longer is the land in these mid-Korean regions

what it was near Fusan, and spring and summer freshets are much to be feared.

Soon we rode away on our kicking little Korean ponies, whose vigour is as extraordinary as that of the miniature horses of Annam, and in three hours we had covered the distance between rail-head and the half-way meeting house. We clattered into a Korean village and were met by a uniformed Japanese railway official, who led the way, hat in hand, to a temple which had been cleaned up and made as habitable as Japanese ingenuity could devise. As we entered the compound, a deadly fear came over me; it was here the engineer of the northern section should have appeared. It was five o'clock; if he should be late and his movements not synchronise exactly with ours, all my faith in the Japanese would vanish.

The violent half-neigh, half-bray of a mule smote our ears and a jingle of bells was added thereto. We looked, and round the corner came an engineer, very dusty and very hot, with a party of his men. Not even a stretch of the imagination could have called him late; it was the junction of the combined armies in a certain place at that psychological moment which spells victory. Wonderful Japanese!

But in the evening, whilst things were being discussed, I discovered that Yong-dong, the village at which we had halted, was marked on the railway at miles 133·8. Now if you divide miles 274·5 by two the result is miles 137·25, which is different from

miles 133·8. Had I been defrauded? Were we then miles 3·45 from the real half-way point? I mentioned my fears to the engineers and they explained. Miles 5·7 belong to the old Seoul-Chemulpo line, long built, and this therefore has to be deducted. Subtract 5·7 from the total and you have 268·8; divide, and you get 134·4. "We are about three-quarters of a mile, or decimal eight, from the future station, and therefore exactly half-way," said one. Japanese precision is evidently based on working everything out to six places of decimals.

Once tongues had been loosened by the contents of round and square bottles, it was easy to understand the extraordinary success, from the Russian point of view, of the sinking of the much-discussed *Knight Commander*. Half the Seoul-Fusan Railway Co.'s steel bridges went down in this ship, with hundreds of tons of other most necessary materials; and had not the most strenuous efforts been made, the completion of the road would have been delayed at least half a year by this single raid. As for the Seoul-Wiju (Yalu) line, which is being built by the Japanese military, the loss of the *Knight Commander* quite crippled construction, as steel rails could not be unloaded in Chinampo after November, and it was doubtful whether fresh cargoes could be got through by then. The *Hitachi Maru* and *Sado Maru* case undoubtedly delayed the siege operations before Port Arthur in the most serious manner; the *Knight Commander* delayed the Korean railways; and last, but not least, the opening April raid of the

Vladivostock squadron, ending in the sinking of a Japanese transport loaded with troops, stopped any possibility of big Japanese landings off North-East Korea at a time when such action would have materially affected the campaign in Southern Manchuria. It is quite certain that the Vladivostockers have done better for the Russians than any other naval units. I tremble to think what the Kyushiu police would have done had they heard such talk; prompt *hara-kiri* could alone have saved us.

The morrow saw us separate again into two parties, and bidding good-bye to the kind-hearted men who had made the first part of my journey so easy for me, I went north with the returning Seoul engineer. We soon picked up the rails again, and by noon we had crossed the last range of mountains on a temporary switchback, where a 1,000 foot tunnel was being pierced. From thence onward it was a ceaseless changing from construction train to ballast train and *vice versâ;* then finally into long lines of empties lumbering crashingly back to head-quarters. Very late in the evening we reached the station of Hanba, and, dog-tired and completely silted up with soot and ballast-dust, we plunged joyfully into boiling Japanese baths and soon forgot the world in sleep.

Hanba lies at the foot of the last mountainous district of Southern Korea and is exactly 104 miles from Seoul. Already the place has assumed some importance, and the numerous sidings, engine sheds, repair shops, and Japanese houses which cover the

ground in the station vicinity show that it has a part to play in the future. Whereas for nearly two hundred miles nothing but hills and mountains had been filling the landscape (although from Taiku it had been better), here the elevation began to be much slighter, and the railway ran through ever broadening valleys which in some places are of such expanse that they might well be called plains. Tall millet and wheat now take the place very often of the everlasting rice of the extreme south, and cotton fields of respectable dimensions succeed one another with great regularity. The mountain villages have here grown into little townships — not very imposing affairs but still showing more prosperity and affluence than would have been expected. Koreans no longer came out in whole villages to stand staring at the mysterious iron-horse that is invading their century-old solitude, but having grown accustomed to the novelty by having done much work on the embankments, they hardly deigned more than a contemptuous sniff.

As we took our places on the open trucks in the morning, well-to-do Koreans swarmed up, accompanied by formidable-looking parcels and bundles that seemed much more important than they, and disputed with us the privilege of sitting "back-on" in the row of people nearest the engine. Carefully calculated kicks, very mild but very insistent and continuous, succeeded, however, in changing erroneous ideas with some rapidity, thus freeing a space where the pure atmosphere of Korea would not be

overcharged with the effluvia of her sons. The Korean, although certainly the most mild and gentlemanly of Eastern peoples, possesses such an inherent dislike to perform monthly or even yearly ablutions that a disconcerting result is produced which can concede many points to garlic-laden Chinamen of the northern provinces of the Celestial Empire.

After a weary wait for a down engine we started, and hour after hour progressed slowly along a track which showed signs of hasty building. The northern section of this railway is not so favoured by nature as the southern; the soil is loamy and shifting, and the embankments have suffered much from the rainy season. Strong working parties, however, are remedying this, and by the summer of 1905 the entire road should be of the same excellent quality throughout. As this railway might become the sole means of communicating with Manchuria, this was important. At last, some sixty miles from Seoul, we came on a passenger train in a station overcrowded with every kind of impedimenta. Big bands of Japanese workmen collected here were going back to Seoul from completed sections, and many rough-looking fellows who were apparently hucksters and railway-followers, shouldering heavy bundles and brandishing thick sticks, added to the throng. Along dozens of miles of road there had been no evidence of Japanese not connected with the railway until now.

For a last time we changed into overcrowded

third-class carriages, of which this advance guard of future passenger trains was composed. If at the Fusan end Koreans already appeared to be patronising the iron-way extensively, here on the Northern section it was even more the case. As we came nearer and nearer the capital, more and more healthy-looking farmers piled into the carriages, until, had we carried sign-boards, they would have displayed the ominous legend, "No more standing place; hanging room only." For the Koreans, determined to travel somehow, loaded themselves on to the very outside steps of the carriages, and, clutching tightly to anything they could catch hold of, journeyed to their capital half in the air with white robes flowing stiffly behind them.

As night fell, flocks of wild geese and long flights of duck rose quacking and shrieking from their feeding grounds, disturbed by the steady pant of our engine and the rhythmic muttering of the iron rails. At Fusan they are very proud of their sport, and tell you that the shooting is something you only dream of in other countries. It seems to me, however, that the neighbourhood of Seoul can give Fusan many points. The whole country is literally stocked with wild fowl, pheasants, and partridges, making it a sportsman's paradise.

Night fell and found me lonely and abandoned at Yung-dong-po, which is the junction five miles from Seoul. Here a wait was necessary until the Chemulpo train rescued me. It was already another world. This line is so civilised and so orderly with

year-old traffic, that to be a traveller from the uncompleted Fusan trunk was hardly reputable. Then, when the train picked me up, it was to seat me in real American cars of an old-fashioned type, but still made of a wood and possessing a finish whose like is not seen in the Far East. Five miles are not hard for even a Korean railway to negotiate, and soon we were puffing past high city walls, through the gates of which electric-lighted and electricity-driven cars swept noiselessly, crossing our path with the audacity of torpedo-craft to a faint clanging of bells. From within the city a subdued bustle rose; many people were walking this way and that; the moon was shining peacefully; and thus Seoul, the Stamboul of the extreme East, received me gratefully in the soot-coated and travel-stained condition which comes from too close a connection with railway building.

CHAPTER XXII

SEOUL, THE PANTOMIME CAPITAL

EVERYTHING is amusing in Seoul — not vulgarly funny, but merely amusing without knowing it; amusing because it is Seoul, and there is only one such city in the world; amusing for ten thousand reasons, and lastly, amusing for no reason at all — which is a serious accusation to level against a helpless place. It begins, too, from the moment you arrive.

The night before, at the Station Hotel — re-christened, merely because it has been rebuilt in anticipation of a Great Boom, the Grand Hotel — I had been received in a way which was significant of what was to follow. My arrival, telegraphed ahead, produced some little excitement, for the entire establishment awaited me on the doorsteps; and the cook, who had escorted me from the station in the sensational disguise of the Far Eastern hotel runner (to wit, hotel cap, grandiloquent coat, but nothing much else), hastily escaped from the arduous task of carrying baggage, visibly discarding his raiment and searching for his apron to begin his

work on beef-steaks. No man could have discovered his nationality — he may have been Korean or he may have been of that uncertain quantity Eurasian; but whatever his origin he immediately became an integral and necessary part of Seoul.

The landlady, an excellent person formerly connected with some Mission that did not prosper, jingled her keys and conjured up visions of a home-life which is so far away; the hungry servants standing expectantly around ate me with their eyes. What room would I have? There was from No. 1 to the end of the chapter — free; cruel fate — I was the only guest. I accepted the situation as best I could, my landlady comforting me with a vague assurance that the Great Boom for which the hotel had been rebuilt — here she stepped back involuntarily as if to leave the passage-way free — might come at any moment, for this empty hotel was very exceptional.

Dinner finished, it was time to stroll round and view immediate surroundings. Ominous signs met my eyes in various directions. The early closing hour, unknown in every other portion of the Far East, was to be enforced vigorously at any cost in smoking-room, deserted billiard-room, and elsewhere; and each order was capped by a more recent and stringent one which spoke eloquently of the recent passage of ribald war-correspondents, who, in despair of ever getting to the front, had made the front come to them — with the aid of rainbow drinks. What stories did not these tipless cues tell? Of games of hammer-billiards, of whisky and cocktail pool, and

other strange devices to make interminable time pass. Oh, hotel-keepers, never tell people ordered to the front to go to bed at twelve; it must be the most costly order in the world.

Between clean sheets for the first time since Japan, it is hard to arouse yourself in the morning in Seoul; but with a wonderful city to be explored, a city which has been the very centre of the Eastern world's intrigues for so long, it is no time to tarry and be idle.

Late autumn is beautiful in Korea. The bitter north winds which will soon sweep down from Manchuria and Siberia have not yet made up their minds to blow; and as the air, although crisp, is delightful, walking in clean Seoul is a pleasure it seldom can be in the Eastern hemisphere. The streets which lead in through the city gates are well-kept, and the electric cars of the night before are gliding as smoothly as ever, with white-clad Koreans who swarm as thickly here as they do on the trains; whilst on foot, women with baggy trousers, coloured shoes, and picturesque green coats worn over the head (masking their faces as effectively as Turkish veils) hasten rapidly along, with sly looks cast hurriedly about them. At the city gates of Seoul, almost for the first time, a sign of the position Japan now occupies in Korea is seen: Japanese gendarmes and infantrymen are posted at every entrance into the city, as if to notify the world in general and Koreans in particular that the question of entry into Korea is now a matter over which the Mikado's

Government alone has supreme control, and that at last a problem which has been annoying everyone for thirty years is in fair way of being solved. Within the gates, it is true, there are other guard-houses and police-boxes where Korean sentries and police, distinguished only by their numbers and the dirtiness of their uniforms, stand lazily. But it is no joint guarding, this, as was the case in Manchuria during 1903 and the preceding years, when Chinese infantry stood side by side with Cossacks under the Russian and Chinese flags at the provincial capitals, with their exact relations entirely undefined. Matters are clearly understood in Seoul, although the difference may seem at first sight trifling. Briefly, Japan keeps by means of her strong arm all undesirables outside, whilst Korea, under guidance, attends to her internal affairs — this is the matter in a nutshell. The whole outward aspect of the Korean political question is surely shown by an inspection of the Seoul city gates.

Entering the South Gate of the Korean capital is very much like going through the Chien Men, or Main Gate, of Peking. You are almost immediately in the Legation quarter, with its streets of outlying foreign and semi-foreign houses, inhabited by the curious mixed tribe of humanity which instinctively congregates about Eastern Legations and battens on their favours and concessions. Even with the great war proceeding, which promises to destroy once and for all the wonderful plotting and planning, intriguing and betraying, notorious for so many

years in Seoul, there are still bountiful signs of an underground activity which centres round the Korean Court and Palace. All sorts of curious people find their way to Seoul, apparently for no particular reason whatsoever, and after a brief probationership take their appointed place in the subterranean scheme of things. Greeks, Jews, Chinamen, and dubious Continentals suspiciously survey you from their various businesses as you walk the streets; you are a new-comer, and therefore a suspect until your business is known.

Along the main road which leads from the city walls to the New Palace entrance, a spasmodic building of small foreign houses is still going on — why no one exactly knows, since, if Russia is finally beaten, Seoul will lose even its pantomime importance and tend to become one of those Sleepy Hollows where once was great activity which abound in the Far East. Chinese contractors and Chinese speculators, who control the foreign building trade in Korea, however, have no two opinions on the subject. After the war there is going to be a boom and a great foreign influx, they state very confidently; and as the Chinaman seldom loses money in "futures" it is well to note his honourable opinion.

Passing through this semi-foreign street, with its Chinese stores, its suspicious hotels, and its nondescript inhabitants, you turn a corner, progress a little, and then your first view of the Palace bursts on you. You do not see much, it is true, for there is mainly a big entrance, after the Chinese style,

encumbered with great blocks of building stone, some high walls, guard-houses, and many guards, around which the current of Seoul city life ceaselessly eddies. But what you do not see immediately, your sub-consciousness, trained by the Far East, tells you of later on just as accurately as your own eyes would do, were they permitted to roam over the most secret details of a wonderfully mysterious and secretive organism.

As you stand supplying the missing parts — building up the whole structure of the animal from a single huge fossilised bone — a steady tramp-stamping calls your attention. It comes nearer and nearer, louder and louder, and then, debouching from the South Gate street, a formidable portion of the Korean army heaves in sight, marching, almost as rapidly as the Italian Bersaglieri, as if a few seconds more or less might mean the life of the Korean Emperor, still daily awaiting sudden assassination.

The companies of infantry reach the little square, a sharp word of command brings the soldiery to a halt — it is the old Russian drill learned at the time of the great intriguing — and there is time to make a minute inspection. The Seoul soldiers are certainly better than those of the Taiku barracks, but it seems as if all Korean infantry carry an excessive weight handicap in their rifles and bayonets; and thus some seconds always go by after a halt during which private grudges are paid back for accidental spearing whilst the operation of grounding arms took place. These little family affairs ended, the

main Palace Gate Guard is changed. Who could describe this ceremony? It is not that the military movements are not carried out correctly, for the Korean drill is very fair — but it is the air of comedy and play which is irresistible everywhere. Then, no sooner have the squads been marched to their posts than they are allowed to do much as they please. Nobody knowing very well how to make the time pass, it seems to have become an understood thing for everybody to mount guard cheerfully at the same time. The men sort themselves into little bunches; here, five men lean up against one another with their bayonets prodding each other; in another corner are half-a-dozen, or even a dozen, carefully drilling one another alternately; further on, three or four are conducting an impromptu sham fight — bayonet *versus* rifle-butt; and, finally, the patrols which everlastingly circle round the Palace wall meet and ambuscade one another with childish cries, to the intense delight of all onlookers.

Meanwhile, the main body has marched away as sprightly as ever to carry out the same interesting ceremony at other entrances and main gates; and from other barracks, other large bodies are performing the same office as zealously as their comrades, at all the gates of fearful officialdom. Korean gendarmes in scarlet coats and armed merely with swords, who have hitherto been conspicuous by their absence, begin to stroll about, apparently arriving from nowhere in particular. Their duties would appear to be clearly defined. Whereas the

OUTSIDE THE SEOUL PALACE.

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Palace Gate Guards and military patrols watch the precincts of the Residence where dwells the sacred but timorous person of the Emperor, and prevent any inrush of armed assassins, the gendarmes look after the soldiers and see that they do not play too much; and so that no possibility should remain of unauthorised persons introducing themselves into the Palace, ordinary Korean police hold the inner gates in large numbers and inspect every pass. With a treble cordon thus interposed between himself and the outer world, the Emperor should feel safe, — and yet he does not, as will be shown later on.

All round, from the front gate of the Palace up to where the narrow Legation Street runs away from a back entrance of the abode of an impotent potentate, there are nothing but patrols of Korean soldiery, slow-marching never endingly and linking up the sentry posts which punctuate every fifty yards of wall. Never was a monarch so well guarded, and never have craven fears been more advertised than here in Seoul.

Half inside the Palace precincts are the offices of the Chief Commissioner of Korean Customs, Mr. McLeavy Brown, who, in spite of every effort to oust him from this most favoured position, clings with the desperation of the defenders of Port Arthur to a narrow strip of Government property which possesses a vast moral importance. Adjoining the Customs Commissionership is the British Legation, which occupies a hardly less fortunate

position. It is but ten feet from a Palace entrance, and the enclosing compound wall is in some places but six from the Imperial Enclosure. Were the British Minister like a Russian Minister, a few night visits over that wall might secure the right to all Korea.

But it is at the American Legation, which stands a little higher up Legation Street, that you are in the closest proximity to the Emperor of Korea's sleeping place. Only seventy-six feet separate the American Minister's head from that of His Imperial Majesty when they are both in bed; and when wild rumours of awful things, which never cease circulating in tortured Seoul, reach the Imperial ears, mysterious messages come from the Palace to Dr. Allen, the American Minister, hinting at the possibility of a nocturnal visit being made which would throw the capitals of the world into some turmoil. "I do not wish the Emperor to climb that wall," says Minister Allen, half-pathetically, "but it is quite possible he may come some night, for everybody says he will." As if to guard against such an unfortunate occurrence, the American Legation is patrolled on its Palace sides by United States marines, who have definite instructions on the subject of night wall-climbing. The days are now over when the Korean Emperor was a welcome guest.

Farther away from this are other Legations, each garrisoned by its own guards. Alone, the Russian Legation — closed and deserted — stands proudly by

itself, a relic of the past. The Japanese Legation is a mile away, standing on the top of a pleasant hill, with a busy Japanese quarter as thoroughly Japan as Tokyo itself below it. Around this hill are congregated ten or twelve thousand Japanese, engaged in buying and selling in their narrow little streets and baby shops, and they form, as it were, a buffer between the Japanese official world, so proudly perched on the hill-top, and the rest of Seoul. The French, German, Italian, and Belgian representatives are still here, but with England and America in Seoul, entirely on the side of Japan, the balance swings heavily against the continent of Europe, now that the leader, Russia, is gone. Yet, in spite of the heavy odds, active intriguing of very many kinds is still going on, and Japan has very far from completed her task, as many people imagine she has already done.

Then, if there is the Palace with its triple cordon of guards and some of the armed Legations leaning close up against it, there is also another factor, or, rather, there was another factor, to wit, the official and unofficial advisers of the Korean Throne and the Korean Government, which are somewhat different things. Belgians, Frenchmen, Germans, Englishmen, Americans, or Japanese — you can take your choice of half the important nationalities of the world — some belonging to the old *régime*, which aimed at encumbering the Government machine to such an extent that no one could take exception to the most extraordinary affairs, seeing that it was

Europe who was to some extent responsible; others owing their allegiance to the new *régime*, which has taken upon itself the herculean task of cleaning out these Augean stables, and almost does not know how to begin. There are French Railway Bureau Directors, Japanese financial and police advisers, a Belgian Foreign Office adviser, who is to be ousted by an American; a German Court doctor, who is never allowed inside the Palace; a German lady housekeeper, who sees to the dusting of Imperial furniture and the safe custody of Imperial title-deeds; lady missionary doctors; enterprising Americans who occupy official or semi-official positions, or claim that they do; foreign this and foreign that — a long list that never ends and that can never be kept properly up to date. Seoul itself now laughs heartily over the whole matter, and does not know who has gone away on short leave and who is never to return again.

By noon, if you happen to stroll back Palace-ways, you will see Court and Government officials, who have just risen, hurrying this way and that; curiously attired persons full of importance but withal not very useful since the thorough little Japanese took possession of the principal *rôles*. Now it requires more than the old-fashioned double-headed and treble-headed intrigues to thwart the Japanese, even temporarily, when they have the upper hand so unmistakably. Some of these officials are in the peculiar Korean sedan-chair, with perspiring coolies marching as rapidly as possible.

Each official is accompanied by a Korean policeman, who serves as an armed escort and gives some sense of security. Others, who wish to appear more modern, are in rickshaws pulled by retainers in curious official hats, who pant so distressfully and so loudly that it requires no shouting to let you know that they are near. These moderns who patronise the rickshaws are the drollest sight of all. Most of them are clad in gorgeous European uniforms, proclaiming a military rank or some high office; and alongside of their vehicles pant at a trot dignified card-bearers in top hats, to whom the unwonted exercise of running is palpable torture, and who keep up a steady entreaty that the pace be moderated.

Everybody and everything wakes up in the afternoon, for the timorous Emperor has finished his sleep, and is ready to dismiss and reappoint his dutiful Ministers with machine-gun rapidity. Nobody is really anybody, as far as the Government of the country is concerned, excepting the Emperor. Even now the diplomatic battle which raged over the question of the opening of Yong-ampho (at the mouth of the Yalu), just before the war, is talked of as constituting a wonderful record in the matter of dismissals and resignations, appointments and reappointments. Each day, then, saw some high Korean official either dismissed, impeached, or resigning for the tenth or twentieth time, and the Emperor reversing the decision made one day by a counter-order on the morrow. It is interesting to

look at a chronicle of events in Korea as an index to Korean Ministerial difficulties. In 1898 there were no less than nine different chiefs of the Korean Foreign Office, showing that it was a year of fierce battling for the rival parties who contested the privilege of dividing up the peninsula. From 1899 to 1901 things were evidently controlled by some strong hand, for the portfolio of Foreign Affairs only changed hands two or three times a year. In 1902 once more the political barometer was much disturbed, and it was obvious that attack and counter-attack were being pushed very vigorously, for again nine successive officials held office in a single year. By 1903 things had reached such a pitch that the chief of the Foreign Office resigned regularly every alternate day, and had his resignation as regularly refused. Finally, it is recorded that the only thing to do in desperation was to fall sick — make yourself sick by drastic measures if necessary — and allow the Court physicians to treat your malady, meanwhile doggedly refusing to leave your bed. Then even the Korean Emperor had to relent and gazette fresh appointments. It has been a wonderful comedy, which now has every appearance of being finally removed from the stage by the firmness of the Japanese.

Whilst the sentries play at being soldiers round the Palace and Court, the Government officials hurry to and fro in the afternoon in their absurd rickshaws and sedan-chairs, busy on a multitude of errands, and while the Emperor lives

in terror within, the outer Korean world is not unmoved. On the contrary, it is vastly perturbed at the course things are taking, and is plotting and counter-plotting with more energy and zest than ever. From the ashes of the old Independents' Club, the moribund Pedlars' Club, and kindred semi-revolutionary or anti-foreign-interference associations, have arisen a host of new organisations, whose exact aims are ill-defined, but which are the natural outcome of the curious transition-stage in which Korea to-day finds itself. Alarmed at the recrudescence of the semi-secret society movement, the Japanese party has created a counter-association, which is the parent-company, so to speak, of a host of concerns which oppose the Korean societies, and break up meetings in a very unceremonious manner. This parent-company is called the Il-Chin-Hoi, but nobody knows very exactly what their intentions are or who are the people behind. There are meetings which sometimes degenerate into free fights, with much more stone-throwing; and the anti-Japanese partisans, who are naturally very numerous, firmly assert that all the able-bodied members of the Il-Chin-Hoi are in receipt of secret pay from the Japanese Government, and that the collisions which take place are, if not actually promoted by the underground machinery of the suzerain power, at least welcomed and made the excuse for all sorts of demands. How much or how little truth there is in such stories it is impossible to say; but the very fact that they exist and circulate very freely

to-day is sufficient to show that the old methods, which are certainly very unworthy ones, have not been completely abandoned, and that it is time for the Tokyo Government to pay more attention to one of the most hopeless and involved situations which has ever existed.

The Korean country-side, the land of little huts, appears, too, to take an increasing interest in the affairs of the capital and try to exert some influence. Deputations are continually arriving to make representations on this point or on that, and when such gentry arrive there is always a great excitement. One morning I was aroused by the rumour that some Tonghaks — the tousle-headed Tonghaks who indirectly brought on the 1894 war — had arrived from up-country, and had created an immense excitement by standing at the Palace gate and blowing big horns to attract the attention of the Imperial dwellers within. I hastened out as soon as possible, and found a large Korean crowd surrounding the main entrance. A double file of Korean soldiery, drawn up hastily, with every appearance of having forgotten how to play in the face of such serious developments, barred further progress; and near their feet were several wild-looking fellows with unkempt hair squatting on a big block of building stone and talking to each other excitedly. Presently one of them, armed with a long horn, got up and started blowing a mournful bellow. The sound echoed lugubriously everywhere, and the crowd waited open-mouthed for something to happen.

Nothing did, however, and presently an officer of the guard approached and succeeded in persuading these redoubtable Tonghaks to move on. They went down the street, followed by an ever growing crowd of Koreans, who eyed them awe-struck and kept at a respectful distance; for rumours had been flying thick and fast for months past that the Tonghaks were going to rise — why, how, or where no one professed to know. It was just one of the vague and absurd rumours which Seoul loves too well to forego. Afterwards I heard from an anti-foreign-interference society man that the Il-Chin-Hoi had been driven on to them, and that finally the Japanese military had arrested everybody for creating disturbances. But whether this again was another rumour, it was impossible to say. The man who would "cut the wings," as the French say, of the *canards* flying around Korea, would soon die of insanity.

It is a relief to take the excellent tram-cars which circle round the city, and, leaving the neighbourhood of the Palace and all its petty intrigues, pass rapidly through the broad streets of a city that has immense possibilities. The promoters and managers of this Seoul tramway system are the partners of an American firm which, by combining Palace intrigue and sound business in the right proportions, have managed to intrench themselves impregnably in the capital, and can afford to laugh at all new-comers. Until the electrification of the Tokyo tramways, Korea, the laughed-at Empire, was the only country

in the Far East boasting of a modern cable-car system; and the success of the enterprise shows that "rapid transit" is exactly what is wanted in countries where time is popularly supposed to be a matter of indifference. The great semi-foreign cities of China are still without such necessary things, whilst Seoul, a mere overgrown village, has had them for years.

There is much to see, too, in Seoul by adopting this method of getting about. It is true there are no beautiful or even interesting shops, for such things are non-existent; but the masses of men and beasts crowding the broad, ample streets present an ever moving kaleidoscope, from which it is hard to tear one's self. Endless trains of ponies are bringing in country produce to the market-places; rough but very serviceable bullock-carts paddle in slowly and majestically from adjacent districts with enormous heaps of food and fodder stacked high on them for sale; and behind these come strings of the patient coolies who, under the weight of the packs which they carry (as great as that strapped to the diminutive ponies), step out just as briskly as the ordinary pedestrian.

Into the endless rows of narrow cloth-shops, pack-coolies are unloading bales upon bales of Manchester and Osaka sheetings and shirtings, whilst mixed in this throng are numberless farmers converting the nickels they have earned by the sale of country produce into as many pieces of cloth as their shrill-voiced bargaining will procure them. Noticing

many Chinese in these shops, I requested a compressed trade report from the Shantung owner of a piece-goods store, and, scratching his head, he laconically replied, "The crops have been good; the money is worse than ever; but the people, although troubled about the war, are spending very freely, and we from Shantung, suffering much from Japanese competition, are still able to live." This means that the Chinaman is becoming rich, for else he would not be so optimistic.

At every point in Korea where there are *bonâ-fide* profits to be made, you will still find the Chinaman in perceptible numbers. At Fusan there are a few dozens who are preparing for a railway boom. At Chemulpo there are a thousand or two, and half the import trade belongs to them. At Seoul all the lucrative businesses are in their hands, and on both banks of the Yalu the Shantung guilds control the lumber and silk cocoon trade, which is the richest business of all. Whereas the Japanese is coming into Korea more or less in the train of his Government, the Chinaman, like the Englishman, never had a Government which had quite enough time to look after him abroad, and, therefore, pushes his way alone, indifferent to everything but money-making. The Chinaman has advanced so far that Ningpo guilds, operating from Nagasaki, now send Chinese packmen by the dozen tramping all over the island of Kyushiu, and managing to make very fair profits, in spite of the alleged poorness of the rural inhabitants.

If you get tired of the broad Seoul streets and a

too continuous study of the theory and practice of barter, there are many other things within and beyond the walls to view and ponder over. Dilapidated remains of once grandiose Palaces, triumphal arches now toppled over, and half-destroyed Chinese stone tortoises swimming in the slime and mud, can be picked out in surprising numbers hidden in the dead-level of modern Korean buildings and huts.

Two miles outside the walls of the capital is the beautiful river Han with its sky-blue Korean water and its enchanting bluffs, where in late autumn a bright sun makes life more than worth living. Still farther on are beautiful temples with wonderful surroundings which make the mind and heart worship as naturally as the great Honganji temples of Kyoto or the Nikko shrines. In such places the Korean must feel he has reached Nirvana, for all the squalidness and sordidness of his ordinary life are left far behind and he breathes an air uncontaminated by the dull and listless mass of humanity which idles away months and years over the length and breadth of the country.

But back in Seoul it is always the Palace and its intrigues which claim attention. All the rest of Korea waits, and has always waited, on the Palace, and the Palace, in turn, forced to pretend that it welcomes the Japanese as deliverers, waits on the great Far Eastern war. If the Japanese beats the Russian, then the Emperor must resign himself to the inevitable. If, on the other hand, the war is inconclusive, all the intriguing will begin again, and by employing every wile the present position may once

more disappear. To one standing in front of the Seoul Palace gate, as the guards and patrols foolishly play with one another, the whole Far East appears in a wonderful light. Everything interweaves and interlocks; everything influences immediately and powerfully everything else, no matter how unconnected events and factors may seem at first sight. And the greatest wonder of all is that this hermit land, which is intrinsically of no great value in the Oriental scheme of things, has started the whole vortex of problems which have finally resulted in the great war. If Japan had not become jealous of China's pretensions in Korea, Li Hung Chang's animosity would not have been aroused, and he would not have sought to intervene in 1894 nominally to crush a rebellion which was already abortive. Then there would have been no Chino-Japanese war and the pro-Japanese party would not have murdered the Korean Queen as the only means of destroying the power of the Conservatives. And had these things not occurred, the others would not have followed; the flight of the Emperor of Korea into the Russian Legation; the Cassini convention in China to make sure that Japan would not be able to repeat her exploits later on; the seizure of Kiaochow, of Port Arthur, and of Kwang-chow; the rising of the Boxers as a vain protest against the eating-away of Chinese territory; the occupation of Manchuria. Every move in the Far East is connected with some other move — and therefore the entire Far East must be considered as a whole or not at all.

The sun sets on Seoul and lights for an instant the whole scene in a golden light. The barren heights of Namsan look down on the city; the Legation flags flutter down; the Japanese bugles ring out; the Palace guards are doubled, for it is at night that most is to be feared; the last courtiers hurry home; the trains of pack ponies amble out; the bullock carts have ceased lumbering by. Then the impression of the first night rises again: the gleaming eyes of the snake-like cable-cars moving slowly and noiselessly round the city; the ghost-like pedestrians becoming fewer and fewer; the twinkling lights of the little houses becoming fainter and fainter along the broad streets. Everybody is going to bed; the Foreign Ministers who no longer have any *raison d'être;* the Greek shop-keepers and the cosmopolitan hotel-keepers who are merely waiting to see what happens to Kuropatkin before they disappear; the intriguers and the advisers; the associations and the counter-associations — all sink in sleep. Alone the Emperor keeps his nightly vigil seventy feet from the American Minister's head. This time he has made sure there will be no killing at night in the Palace, he cunningly thinks. There may be a disappearance into a neighbouring Legation, but that is all. Poor Emperor! the sport of events over which you have no control, the uneasy spirit oppressed by many ghosts, are you merely foolish, or are you wise?

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